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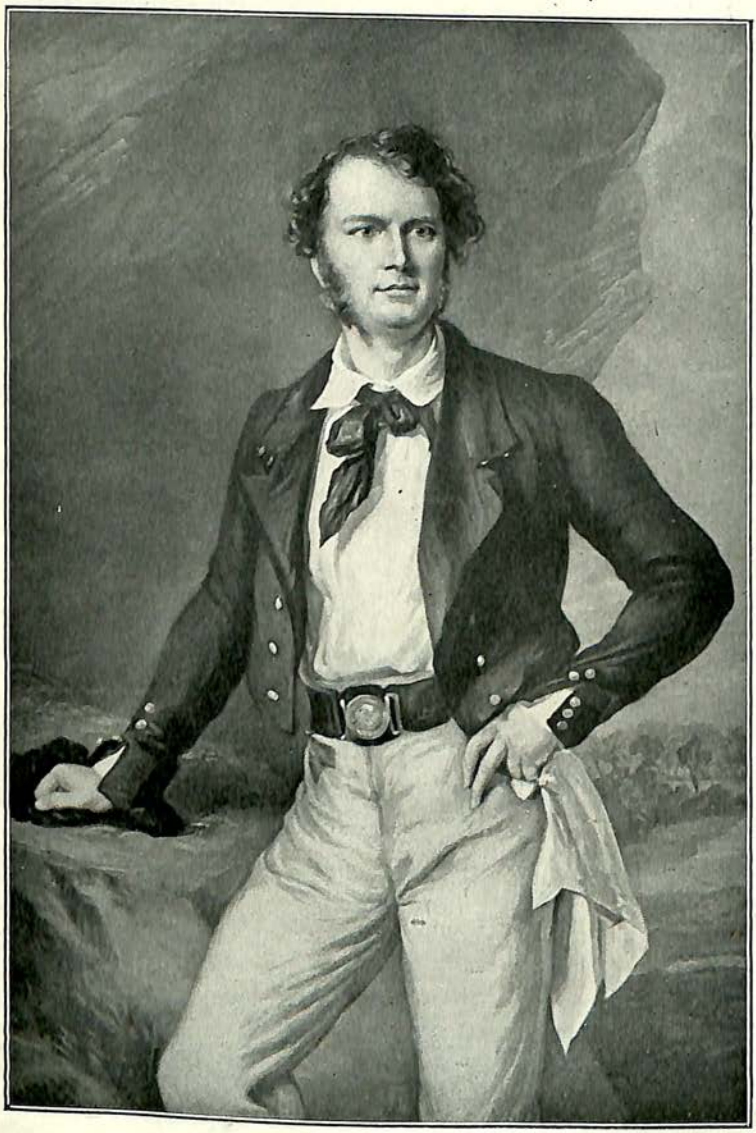

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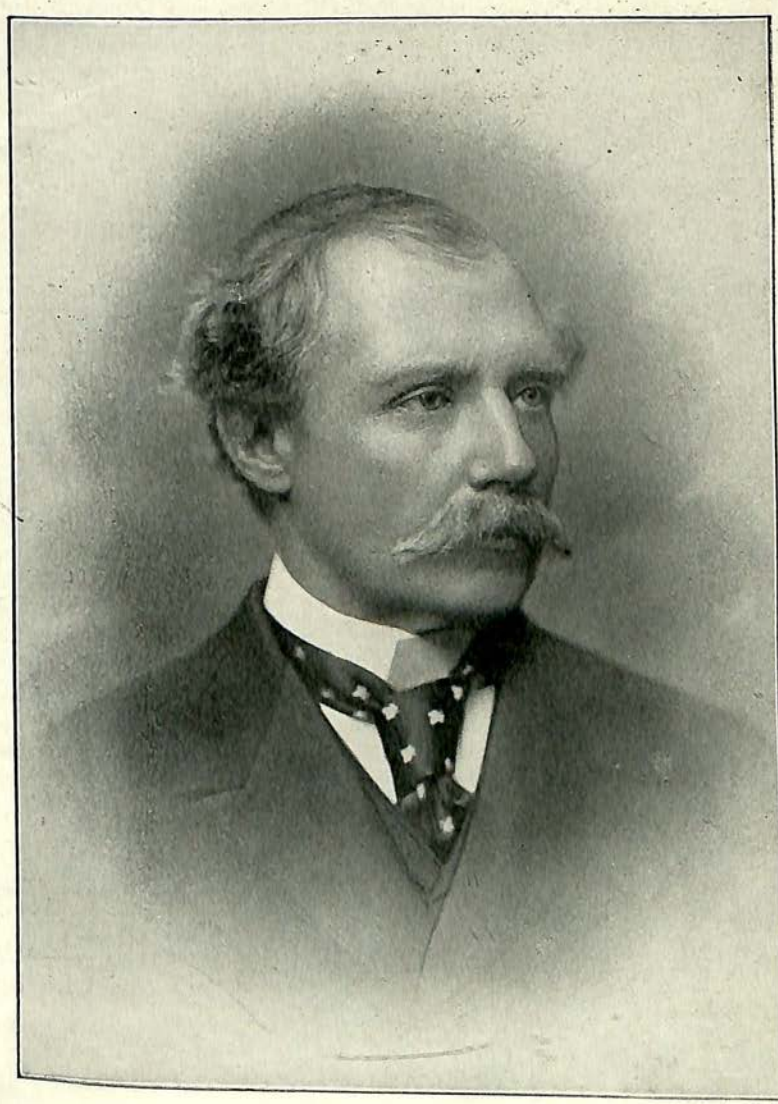

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A History of Sarawak

under its

Two White Rajahs

1839–1908

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BY

S. BARING-GOULD, M.A.

AUTHOR OF 'THE TRAGEDY OF THE CAESARS,' ETC.

AND

C. A. BAMPFYLDE, F.R.G.S.

LATE RESIDENT OF SARAWAK

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DEDICATED

WITH HIGH APPRECIATION OF THE WORK DONE BY THEM

UNDER THE TWO RAJAHS

TO THE OFFICERS

ENGLISH AND NATIVE, PAST AND PRESENT

OF THE

RAJ OF SARAWAK

PREFACE

As I have been requested to write a preface to *The History of Sarawak under its Two White Rajahs*, one of whom I have the honour to be, I must, first of all, assert that I have had nothing to do with the composition or writing of the book, and I do not profess to be a writer, otherwise than in a very ordinary sense, having left school at the age of twelve to enter the Navy.

In that service I remained for ten years, when I obtained my lieutenancy, and then received two years' leave, which the Admiralty were glad to grant at that time (about 1852), as they thought naval officers were of a type likely to be of service in the development of the colonies and the improvement of native states. I then went to Sarawak to join my uncle, the first Rajah, with and under whom I remained, and consequently had to retire from the Navy; but I will admit that my ten years' service gave me what I probably could not have gained from any other profession—the advantages of having been taught to obey my seniors, and of having been disciplined; and I very firmly adhere to the rule that no one can make a successful commander unless he has learnt to obey. It further taught me those seafaring qualities, which have been so useful ever since, of

being able to rough it and put up with one's surroundings, the lack of which so often makes the men of the present day, in their refined and gentlemanly way, not quite suited to handle the wheel of a ship at sea or the plough on land.

Now I will pass on to say how this book, good or bad as it may be—and I am not competent to pass judgment either way—came to be written. I was asked by more than one if I had any objection to the writing of my biography, and I, as far as I can recollect, gave no decided answer one way or the other; but I thought if I handed over the correspondence and all records that related to Sarawak and its Government that the distinguished author, Baring-Gould, and my friend, Charles Bampfylde, might be enabled to form a truthful account, and at the same time give the public a readable book.

I thought that some interest might be felt in the story of a life such as mine has been for the last sixty years, coupled with an account of the institutions, manners, and customs of the inhabitants of Sarawak, and especially of the way in which we have always treated the native population, finding much profit by it, more in kindliness and sympathy than in a worldly point of view, by making them our friends, and I may say associates, though they are of a different creed and different colour; and how we gained their hearts by living among them and really knowing them, not as superiors, but as equals and friends; and I thought being brought out during my life by the pen of the able author and that of my old and much-esteemed officer, Mr. Bampfylde, it would be more likely to give a correct impression than if some one took up the pen after my death and gained material from some good and some rather scratchy

works that have been written on Sarawak, since such an one would probably make up a work that would be, no doubt, very readable and well adapted to take the fashion of the day, but not so truthful as a man of long personal experience could do, and has, I think, done it; and this I can aver, that what is written are facts, however plain and uninteresting they may prove. The work is not the history of my life more than that of the late Rajah, and I may flatter myself that we—he as founder and myself as builder of the state—have been one in our policy throughout, from the beginning up to the present time; and now shortly I have to hand it to my son, and I hope that his policy may not be far removed from that of his predecessors.

My life draws towards its close, but the book, if and whenever brought out, will stand in the future as a record of events that may be considered as the work of private individuals who stood alone and unprotected in a far distant land, and who were, I may also say, fortunately, scarcely ever interfered with, or the policy of Sarawak could not have been as successful as it has proved. It will, I have reason to believe, attract more attention in comparatively new countries, such as America and Australia, where the story of Sarawak is perhaps better known than in England. One word more, and that is, that the native element has always been our base and strong point: and our lives are safe with them so long as they are wisely treated and relied on with thorough trust and confidence.

C. BROOKE,
Rajah.

CHESTERTON, *8th January* 1909.

CONTENTS

PREFACE Page vii
MALAY TITLES ,, xxi

CHAPTER I

BORNEO

Geographical and geological description—Its jungles—Natural history—Races of men in Sarawak—Census—Area—Climate Pages 1-35

CHAPTER II

EARLY HISTORY

Early Chinese and Hindu-Javanese influence, and settlements—Rise of the Malays—Their sultanates in Borneo—European intercourse with Northern Borneo from 1521-1803—Decline of Bruni—Earliest records of Sarawak—English and Dutch in the Malayan Archipelago and Southern Borneo from 1595—Trade monopolies an impulse to piracy—How the Sea-Dayaks became pirates—Cession of Bruni territory to Sulu—Transferred to the East India Company—Events in Bruni that led to Rajah Muda Hasim becoming Regent—His transfer to Sarawak—Oppression and depopulation of the Land-Dayaks—Condition of North-West Borneo in 1839—List of the Sultans of Bruni 36-60

CHAPTER III

THE MAKING OF SARAWAK

Early life of James Brooke—First visit to Sarawak—Condition of the country—Dutch trading regulations—Brooke offered the Raj-ship—He suppresses the insurrection—The intrigues of Pangiran Makota, and the shuffling of the Rajah Muda—A crisis: Brooke invested as Rajah—Makota dismissed—Sarawak and other provinces—The Sherips—Condition of the country—The Datus—Laws promulgated—Redress of wrongs—Measures taken to

check the Sekrang and Saribas pirates—Sherip Sahap receives a lesson—Brooke visits Bruni—Bruni and its court—Cession of Sarawak to Brooke confirmed—Installation at Kuching—Makota's discomfiture, and banishment—Reforms introduced—Suppression of piracy and head-hunting—Captain the Honourable H. Keppell induced to co-operate Pages 61-91

CHAPTER IV

THE PIRATES

A general account of the pirates—Cruise of the *Dido*—Brushes with the pirates—Expedition against the Saribas—The Rajah visits Bruni—Sir Edward Belcher's mission—The Rajah joins a naval expedition against Sumatran pirates—Is wounded—*Dido* returns to Sarawak—The Batang Lupar expedition—Sarawak offered to the British crown—The Rajah's difficult position—Return of Rajah Muda Hasim to Bruni—The Rajah appointed H.M.'s Agent in Borneo—Visits Bruni—Intrigues of Pangiran Usup—Sir Thomas Cochrane—Usup's downfall—The pirate's stronghold in Marudu Bay destroyed—Death of Usup—Fresh troubles on the coast—Rajah Muda Hasim and his brothers murdered—Bruni attacked and captured by Cochrane—Further action against the Lanun pirates—Submission of the Sultan—His end—Sarawak becomes an independent state—Labuan ceded to the British—Jealousy and pretensions of the Dutch—Treaty with Bruni—Defeat of the Balenini pirates—The Rajah visits England, 1848—Honours accorded him—Captain James Brooke-Brooke joins the Rajah—The Sarawak flag—The Rajah establishes Labuan—Visits Sulu—Depredations by the Saribas and Sekrangs—Action taken—The Rajah revisits Sulu, and a treaty is concluded—The battle of Beting Maru—Venomous attacks upon the Rajah and naval officers—A Royal Commission demanded in Parliament to investigate the Rajah's conduct negatived—Diplomatic visit to Siam—Recognition by the United States—The Rajah returns to England, 1851—Public dinner in his honour—Commission granted by coalition ministry—The Rajah returns to Sarawak, 1853—Attack of small-pox—The Commission sits in Singapore in 1854—Complete breakdown of charges against the Rajah—Gladstone unconvinced—Mischief caused by the Commission" 92-152

CHAPTER V

RENTAP

Commencement of the present Rajah's career in Sarawak in 1852—Entitled the Tuan Muda—At Lundu—The situation in the Batang Lupar—Rentap—Death of Lee—The Tuan Muda at Lingga—Lingga and the people—Fresh concessions of territory—Expeditions against Dandi and Sungie Lang—The Tuan Muda in charge of the Batang Lupar and Saribas—Disturbed state of the country—Kajulau attacked—Saji's escape—First attack on Sadok, 1857—Expedition against the Saribas—A station established there—Defeat of Linggir—Second (1858) and final (1861) attacks on Sadok—End of Rentap 153-184

CHAPTER VI

THE CHINESE REBELLION, AND SECRET SOCIETIES

The Chinese in Sarawak—The Secret Society, or Hueh—Circumstances that led to the rebellion—Kuching captured by the rebels—They form a provisional government, and retire up river—Their return—Malay town burnt—How the situation was changed—Flight of the Chinese—Pursued and driven over the border—Their after fate—Action of the British and Dutch authorities—The rebellion the outcome of the Commission—Comments by English papers—After the rebellion—The Hueh dormant, not extinct—Gives trouble in 1869—In open revolt against the Dutch, 1884-85—Severely punished in Sarawak in 1889, and again in 1906 . . . . . Pages 185-206

CHAPTER VII

THE SHERIP MASAHOR

The Datus—The Datu Patinggi Gapur—Sherip Masahor—Gapur's misconduct and treachery—His punishment—Muka in a state of anarchy—Pangiran Matusin kills Pangiran Ersat—S. Masahor's cold-blooded revenge—The Tuan Muda at Muka—S. Masahor punished—The Rajah reforms the Bruni Government—Thwarted by the Sultan—Fort built at Serikei—The Rajah intervenes at Muka—He goes to England—Makota's death—The Tuan Muda in charge—Commencement of conspiracies—Kanowit—Troubles at Muka, and the Tuan Muda's action there—Murder of Steele and Fox—The conspiracy—Disconnected action—The general situation—The murderers of Steele and Fox punished—Ramifications of the plot—Its repression, and the fate of its promoters—Indifference of the British Government—The Rajah in England—Paralysis—Failure to obtain protection—Pecuniary difficulties—The Borneo Company, Limited—Miss Burdett-Coutts—The first steamer—Public testimonial—Burrator 207-245

CHAPTER VIII

MUKA

The Honourable G. W. Edwardes Governor of Labuan—Supports Sherip Masahor, and condemns the Tuan Muda—Muka closed to Sarawak traders—The Tuan Besar attempts to open friendly negotiations with the authorities at Muka—A declaration of war—Muka invested—Governor Edwardes interferes—The Tuan Besar protests, and withdraws his forces—Evil caused by Edwardes' action far-reaching—Disapproved of by the Foreign Office—Transfer of Muka to Sarawak—Banishment of S. Masahor—Territory to Kedurong Point ceded to Sarawak—S. Masahor's end—His cruelties—The Tuan Besar becomes Rajah Muda—The Tuan Muda follows the Rajah to England in 1862 246-266

CHAPTER IX

THE LAST OF THE PIRATES

The revival of piracy in 1858—Inaction of the Navy, a fruit of the Commission —Destruction of a pirate fleet by the *Rainbow* off Bintulu—Cessation of piracy . . . . . Pages 267-278

CHAPTER X

THE KAYAN EXPEDITION

Return of the Rajah to Sarawak—The Rajah Muda retires—The recognition of Sarawak as an independent state granted—The Kayan expedition—Submission of the Kayans—The murder of Fox and Steele fully avenged—The Rajah bids farewell to Sarawak 279-294

CHAPTER XI

THE END OF THE FIRST STAGE

The opening and closing of the first stage—The Rajah's retirement—His general policy—Frowned upon—What England owes to him—Paralleled with Sir Stamford Raffles—The Rajah's larger policy—Abandoned—Recognition—Financial cares—At Burrator—Death, June 11, 1868—Dr. A. R. Wallace's testimony—The Rajah's opinion of his successor—Principles of government. 295-306

CHAPTER XII

THE BEGINNING OF THE SECOND STAGE

Charles Brooke proclaimed Rajah—Improvements needed—The Datu's testimony —System of governing—The two councils—Administration in out-stations—Malay courts—Native chiefs—The Rajah's opinions and policy—Slavery—Relations with the Dutch—The Rajah's duties—Commercial and industrial development—Disturbances between 1868 and 1870—The Rajah leaves for England—His marriage 307-325

CHAPTER XIII

BRUNI

Its story—Inconsistency of British policy—Sultan Mumin—Feudal rights—Oppression and misgovernment—Trade interfered with—Apathy of the

British Government—Labuan a failure—Its governors inimical to Sarawak—The Rajah visits Bruni—A treaty and its evil results—The Rajah visits Baram—The situation in that river—Bruni methods—The Kayans rebel—The Sultan disposed to cede Baram to Sarawak—The British Government disapproves—The reason—The Rajah recommends a policy—Adopted by the Foreign Office too late—The late Rajah's policy and that adopted in regard to the native states of the Malay Peninsula—Mr. Ussher Governor of Labuan—A change—Baram taken over by Sarawak—Troubles in the Limbang—Trusan ceded to Sarawak—Death of Sultan Mumin—Sultan Hasim—His difficult position—The Limbang in rebellion—The Rajah declines to help the Sultan—The Sultan advised by Sir F. Weld—Bruni becomes a protectorate, but a Resident is not appointed—The Limbang people hoist the Sarawak flag—The Rajah annexes Limbang—The Sultan refuses to accept the decision of the Foreign Office—His real motives—Sir Spenser St. John's comments—Present condition of Limbang—Muara and its coal-fields—Tenure and rights of the Rajah—Lawai—Murut feuds suppressed—Bankrupt condition of Bruni—Responsibility of the British Government—Tutong and Belait—Transfer of Lawas to Sarawak—British Resident appointed to Bruni—Alternatives before the Foreign Office—The worst adopted—A poor bargain—Death of Sultan Hasim—A harsh tax—The Rajah protests—His position at Muara—Comments on the policy of the British Government . . . . . Pages 326-372

CHAPTER XIV

THE SEA-DAYAKS

Three stages in the Rajah's service—A fourth added—Sea-Dayak affairs to 1907—The character of the Sea-Dayaks—The Kayans, Kenyahs, and other inland tribes—Tama Bulan 373-392

CHAPTER XV

THE RAJAH AND RANEE

Their arrival in Sarawak in 1870, and their welcome—Description of Kuching—1839, a contrast—The Rajah and Ranee visit Pontianak and Batavia—Their return to England—Deaths of their children—Birth of the Rajah Muda—The Vyner family—Lord Derby's compliment—Lord Clarendon—Lord Grey's interest in Sarawak—Difficulties in the interior—Birth of the Tuan Muda—The Rajah's narrow escape—Birth of the Tuan Bongsu—Extension of territory—Limbang—Protection accorded—A review of the progress of Sarawak after fifty years—The Rajah's speech—The annexation of the Limbang—The Rajah Muda proclaimed as successor—Proposal to transfer North Borneo to Sarawak—Keppel's last visit, and his last letter to the Rajah—The Ranee obliged to leave Sarawak—The Rajah Muda joins the Service—Is given a share in the Government—The Natuna islands—Steady advance—The Rajah's policy—Its main essential—Malay chiefs—The Datus—What the Brookes have done for Sarawak 393-424

CHAPTER XVI

FINANCE—TRADE—INDUSTRIES

Revenue and expenditure—Chinese merchants—The Borneo Company, Limited—Trade from the early days to 1907—Agriculture—Land tenure—Jungle produce—Minerals—Mechanical industries . . . Pages 425-438

CHAPTER XVII

EDUCATION—RELIGION—MISSIONS

The education of native children a problem—Schools—Islamism—Paganism—The S.P.G. Mission—Roman Catholic Missions—American Methodist Mission 439-450

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

PAGE

The late Rajah. From an engraving after the painting by Sir Francis Grant, P.R.A. . . . . *Frontispiece*

The present Rajah. Photo, Bassano i

Nepenthes and Rafflesia. C. R. Wylie 1

Mt. St. Pedro, or Kini Balu. C. R. Wylie. From St. John's *Life in the Forests of the Far East* 2

Ukit Chief, wife and child. Photo, C. A. Bampfylde . . 13

A Punan. Photo, Lambert and Co., Singapore . . . 14

A Kayan girl. Photo, Lambert and Co., Singapore . . 17

Group of Muruts. Photo, Mrs. E. A. W. Cox . . . 20

Land-Dayak Chief, with his son and grandson. Photo, Rev. J. W. Moore. 22

Sea-Dayak Chief (Pengulu Dalam Munan). Photo, Tum Sai On 23

Sea-Dayak girl. Photo, Buey Hon 26

Satang Islands. C. R. Wylie 35

Mercator's map. C. R. Wylie 36

Old jar ("Benaga"). Photo, C. A. Bampfylde . . . 36

Figure at Santubong. Photo, Lambert and Co. . . . 39

Kuching, 1840. From *Views in the Eastern Archipelago*, J. A. St. John 61

Tower of old Astana. C. R. Wylie, from a photo by Buey Hon 61

The *Royalist* off Santubong. C. R. Wylie 63

Land-Dayak village. Photo, C. Vernon-Collins . . . 76

PAGE

Land-Dayak head-house. Photo, Rev. J. W. Moore . . 81

Kuching, present day. Photo, Buey Hon 91

H.E.I.C. *Phlegethon.* C. R. Wylie 92

H.M.S. *Dido.* From *Expedition to Borneo.* Keppel. C. R. Wylie 92

The present Rajah as a midshipman 105

Attack on Sherip Usman's stronghold. C. R. Wylie. From *Views in the Eastern Archipelago* 151

Old Sekrang fort. C. R. Wylie. From *Ten Years in Sarawak* 153

Sea-Dayak shield and arms. C. R. Wylie 153

On the war-path. Photo, C. A. Bampfylde 184

Government station at Bau. Photo, Buey Hon 185

Old Chinese temple, Kuching. Photo, Lambert and Co. . . 196

Chinese procession 205

Malay lela (cannon) and spears. C. A. Bampfylde 207

Sherip Masahor's spear. C. R. Wylie 207

Kanowit. C. A. Bampfylde 244

Native tools and hats. C. A. Bampfylde and C. R. Wylie . 246

Melanau sun-hat. C. R. Wylie 246

Plan of operations at Muka 249

Sarawak flag: execution kris. C. R. Wylie 267

Sulu kris. C. A. Bampfylde and C. R. Wylie 268

Native musical instruments. C. A. Bampfylde and C. R. Wylie 279

Kayan mortuary. C. A. Bampfylde and C. R. Wylie . . 279

Punan mortuary. Photo by Mrs. E. A. W. Cox . . . 283

Kayan mortuary. Photo by Mrs. E. A. W. Cox . . . 288

Sea-Dayak house. From a photo by Lambert and Co. C. R. Wylie 295

The Rajah's grave. Photo by Major W. H. Rodway . . 295

Kuching. C. R. Wylie, from photos by Buey Hon . . . 299

Fort Margherita, Kuching. C. R. Wylie, from photo by Buey Hon 307

Berrow Vicarage. C. R. Wylie, from a photo . . . 307

PAGE

Fort Brooke, Sibu. Photo, Lambert and Co. 324
H.H.S. *Zahora*. C. R. Wylie, from a photo 325
Daru'l Salam. C. R. Wylie. From *Life in the Forests of the Far East*. 326
Bruni gong. C. R. Wylie 326
The Sultan's palace. C. R. Wylie, from a photo by Mrs. E. A. W. Cox 332
Trusan Fort. Photo, Mrs. E. A. W. Cox 345
On the Lawas river. Photo, M. G. Bradford 363
The *Gazelle*. Photo, Buey Hon 372
Sea-Dayak war-boat. Photo, C. A. Bampfylde 373
Land-Dayak weapons. C. R. Wylie 373
The Sarawak Rangers. Photo, Lambert and Co. 376
Rangers in mufti. Photo, Buey Hon 377
Kapit Fort. Photo, C. A. Bampfylde 380
Fort Alice, Simanggang. Photo, Lambert and Co. 385
Sea-Dayak war-boats. Photo, C. A. Bampfylde 391
The Astana. C. R. Wylie, from photos 393
Kuching, from down river. Photo, Buey Hon 394
Drawing-room, Astana. Photo, Lambert and Co. 397
Dining-room, Astana. Photo, Lambert and Co. 397
The Esplanade, Kuching. Photo, Buey Hon 399
Hospital, Kuching. Photo, Buey Hon 403
The Malay Members of Supreme Council. Photo, Buey Hon . 407
The Police. Photo, Buey Hon 409
Chinese Street, Kuching. Photo, Buey Hon 413
Interior of Museum, Kuching. Photo, Buey Hon 415
Buildings in Kuching. Photo, Buey Hon 421
General Market, Kuching. Photo, Lambert and Co. . . . 423
Chesterton House, Cirencester. Photo, W. D. Moss . . 424
The Borneo Company's Offices, Kuching. Photo, Buey Hon . 425
A pepper garden 434
Chinese sluicing for gold. Photo, Buey Hon 436

PAGE

Brooketon coal-mines. Photo, Buey Hon 437

Cyanide works at Bau. Photo, Buey Hon 438

St. Joseph's and St. Thomas's Churches. Photo, Buey Hon . 439

Malay mosque. Photo, Buey Hon 439

S.P.G.'s boys' school. Photo, Buey Hon 441

S.P.G.'s girls' school. Photo, Buey Hon 442

R.C. boys' school. Photo, Buey Hon 443

Chinese temple 450

Map at end of volume.

TITLES

SULTAN.—Supreme head of the once large Bruni Sultanate, which is now only a corner or enclave within the raj of Sarawak. Iang di Pertuan, the Lord who Rules, is the correct supreme title in Bruni, and the one most generally in use.[1]

SULTAN MUDA, heir-apparent. Lit. young Sultan, but seldom used. Iang di Pertuan Muda is the more correct Malay title. Cp. Pangiran, *infra*.

RAJAH (fem. Rani, or Ranee).—The old title of the Bruni sovereigns. It is a Sanskrit word, and means king. But in Bruni it was improperly assumed by those (male and female) of royal descent. This has fallen into disuse, that is, none of them now bears such a title, but in referring to the princes of Bruni generally the term Rajah Rajah[2] would be used. Rulers of districts were never entitled to the title *ex officio*. Such rulers are feudal chiefs with the title of Pangiran, and their chieftainship is generally hereditary.

RAJAH MUDA, heir apparent. Lit. young Rajah.

PANGIRAN is the highest Bruni title. Pangiran Muda—sometimes Pangiran Muda Besar—is another title of the heir-apparent to the Sultanate. (Rajah Muda is only used in Sarawak.) It is a Javanese title and means prince. It is not, however, now confined only to persons of royal descent as formerly, and the title has become very common, especially as illegitimate as well as legitimate children of all pangirans assume it.

DATU.—Lit. great-grandfather (by extension—ancestor). This is a high title in the Malay Peninsula, and the highest in Sarawak, but not in Bruni, though it is in Sulu. It can be conferred by the Ruler alone, and is an official title and not hereditary. It is only granted to Malays.[3]

[1] Sultan is a title foreign to the Court language of Bruni.—Sir Hugh Low, G.C.M.G., *Sarawak*, 1848.

[2] *Rajah*, correctly Raja. Plural is expressed by duplication.

[3] In Bruni this title also is now debased by being granted to all natives, Chinese included.

BANDAR (Persian).—The meaning of this word is a port. Datu Bandar, one of the highest titles in Sarawak, would mean the chief of the port or town.

SHAH BANDAR means the Controller of the Customs.

BANDAHARA (Sanskrit.).—A treasurer. The Pangiran Bandahara is the chief of the four Wazirs of Bruni. The present Bandahara is Regent of Bruni.

TEMANGGONG.—Another high official title, meaning Commander-in-Chief. The Pangiran Temanggong is one of the Bruni Wazirs.

DI GADONG AND PEMANCHA.—Also high official titles, the meanings of which are uncertain. The Pangiran di Gadong and the Pangiran Pemancha are the titles of the other two Bruni Wazirs.[1]

PATINGGI (from Tinggi—elevated, exalted; hence Maha-tinggi, the most high). The Datu Patinggi was the highest or premier chief in Sarawak.

PENGLIMA.—A Malay title, also sometimes formerly given to Dayaks; means a Commander.

ORANG KAYA.—Lit. rich man. A title generally given to Malay chiefs of inferior rank and to the Dayak chiefs.

SHERIF[2]—An Arab title meaning noble. A title assumed by half-bred Arabs claiming descent from Muhammad. These men also take the exalted Malay title of Tunku or Tungku[3] by which princes of the royal blood are alone addressed, but more especially the Sultan.

HAJI.—One who has made the pilgrimage to Mecca.

TUAN.—Master, Sir, Lord, Mistress, Lady. Tuan Besar—High Lord. Tuan Muda—Young Lord.

NAKODA.—Shipmaster, merchant.

PENGULU.—Headman. A title given to Dayak district chiefs.

INCHI.—Mister—a lower title than Tuan. A title foreign to Sarawak, and in that country only assumed by foreign Malays.

[1] St. John gives the di Gadong as Minister of Revenues, and the Pemancha as Minister for Home Affairs.—*Forests of the Far East.*

[2] Pronounced by Malays Sherip, or Serip. Fem. Sheripa, Seripa. Sayid is another, though in the East less common title, assumed by descendants of the Prophet. Sir Richard Burton in his *Pilgrimage* says the former, men of the sword, the ruling and executive branch, are the descendants of El Husayn, the Prophet's grandson; and the latter, men of the pen, religion, and politics, are descended from the Prophet's eldest grandson, El Hasan. Siti is the female title.

[3] A corruption of Tuan-ku (Tuan aku), my Lord, as it is often so pronounced.

ABANG.—Lit. elder brother. Datu's sons are styled Abang, and also Malay Government chiefs below the rank of Datu.

LAKSAMANA.—An Admiral.

IMAUM.—High Priest.

HAKIM.—A Judge: lit. a learned man.

AWANG.—A title sometimes given to the sons of Pangirans.

DAYANG OR DANG.—Lady of rank. A title given to daughters of Datus and Abangs.

WAN.—Another title given to Sherifs, but more generally to their sons. It is probably derived from the Arabic word Awan, meaning a helper or sustainer of Muhammad.

The following Malay geographical terms should also be noted:—

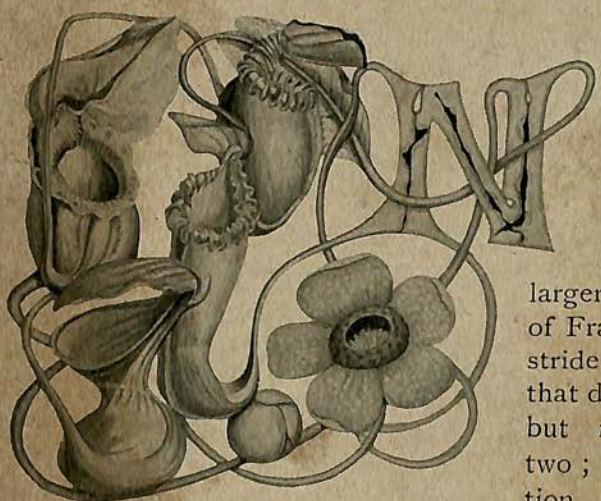
BUKIT, a hill. DANAU, a lake. GUNONG, a mountain.

PULAU, an island. SUNGI, a river. TANJONG, a cape.

KAMPONG, a village, or subdivision of a town, a parish.

CHAPTER I

BORNEO



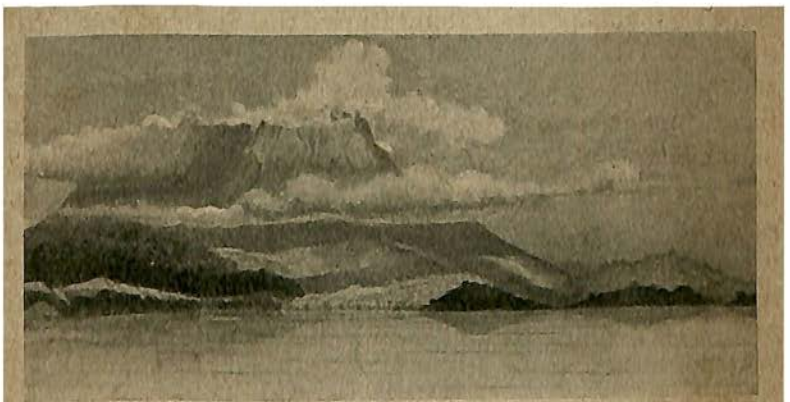
NEPENTHES, AND RAFFLESIA TUAN-MUDÆ.

NEXT to Australia and New Guinea, Borneo[1] is the largest island in the world; it is larger than the whole of France. It sits astride on the equator, that divides it nearly, but not wholly, in two; the larger portion being to the north of the Line.

The belt of islands, Sumatra, Java, and the chain to Timor and the Sarwatty group, represents a line of weakness in the crust of the earth, due to volcanic action, which still makes itself felt there. But the axis of elevation of Borneo

[1] The name Borneo is a corruption of Burni, itself a corruption of Beruni or Bruni, the capital of that ancient but now decayed Sultanate bearing the same name, and of which Sarawak, and a great part of British North Borneo, once formed parts. It was the first place in Borneo with which the Spanish and Portuguese had any dealings, and in their old chronicles it is referred to as Burni, and Borneo subsequently became the distinguishing name of the whole island to Europeans. The natives themselves have none, except perhaps the doubtful one of Pulau Ka-lamanta-an, the island of raw sago, so named in recent times by the merchants and traders of the Straits Settlements as being the island from which that commodity was brought, and in those settlements it has since become the native name for Borneo. But in Sarawak this name is known to the Malays alone, and in other parts of Borneo, perhaps only a few have heard of it. In fact, it is applicable to Sarawak only, for in former days sago was exported to the Straits solely from that country, and the

is almost at right angles to this line, and in it are no active vents, and if there be extinct volcanoes, these are in the extreme north only. In Sarawak there are several hot springs, the water of which is impregnated with sulphuretted hydrogen. The island owes its origin, as far as we can judge, to a great upheaval of plutonic rock that has lifted aloft and shivered the overlying beds, but the granite does not come everywhere to the surface. Something analogous may be seen in Exmoor, where the superincumbent clay-slate has been heaved up and strained, but the granite no-



MOUNT ST. PEDRO, OR KINA BALU, 13,700 FEET.

where shows save in Lundy Isle, where the superposed strata have been swept away, leaving the granite exposed.

Borneo is about 850 miles in length and 600 in breadth, and contains an area of 286,000 square miles. The centre of Borneo is occupied by broken hilly highland, with isolated mountains, of which the finest is the granite peak of Kina Balu (13,700 feet). Hills come down in places to the sea, as in the south of Sarawak, where they attain a height of from 2000 to over 5000 feet, and die into the sea at Cape Datu. The plains, chiefly swamps, are composed of the wash of the mountains, overlaid by

trade was carried on by Sarawak Malays, first with Penang and subsequently with Singapore. An old English map of about 1700 gives to the town of Bruni, as well as to the whole island, the name of Borneo. Mercator (1595) also gives Borneo to both.

Bruni is variously spelt Brunai, Brunei, Bruné, Borneo, Borney, Bornei, Porne, and Burni by old writers; all corruptions of Bruni. The Sanskrit word Bhurni, meaning land or country, has been suggested as the origin of the name.

vegetable mould, and these fringe the coast, extending inland from ten to thirty miles, with here and there isolated humps of hill standing up out of them.

The island is probably the best watered in the world. On every side are numerous rivers, mainly rising in the central highlands, at first dancing down the mountain ledges in cascades, then, forming dangerous rapids, enter the plain, and there swelled by affluents and widening out advance with no strong current to the sea. Owing to the width of the river-mouths, and to the configuration of the coast, some of them, as the Batang Lupar, the Sadong, and Saribas, have tidal bores, as is the case with our River Severn, that run up as many as seventy miles into the interior, and most have deposited troublesome bars at their mouths, and have embouchures clogged by shoals. To the slight fall is largely due the remarkable way in which several of these rivers descend into the ocean through plural mouths, thus forming a network of lateral waterways, called Loba and Trusan, whereby they mix and mingle with other rivers, and, very much like the Rhine after entering Holland, lose their identity and are frittered away in many channels. The Rejang, for instance, finds issue through five mouths, and the land between the Rejang and Igan entrances, which meet at Sibu, the apex of the delta, is a vast unbroken swamp, 1200 square miles in area. The same phenomenon is noticed in the Sarawak river, and in the Limbang to a smaller degree.

The rainfall in Borneo is so great, the rainy season lasting from October to April,[1] that the rivers are very numerous and copious, rolling down large volumes of water. Severe droughts are, however, not uncommon during the fine season of the S.W. monsoon.

Between Kuching and Bruni are the Sadong, Batang Lupar, Saribas, Kalaka, Rejang, Bintulu, and the Baram rivers, all available as waterways for trade with the interior. For fifteen miles only from its mouth is the Batang Lupar navigable by steamers, above that, though a fine broad river, it is obstructed by dangerous shoals. The Rejang is navigable by steamers for 170 miles, nearly as far as

[1] See page 34.

the first rapids. This noble river descends many stages by as many plunges from terraces. Between the rapids the river is deep, sluggish and broad for many miles. Boats that can be hauled up past the rapids can ascend a distance of 650 miles from the mouth. The Baram river is navigable by steamers for some twenty miles above Claude Town, that is, eighty miles from the mouth, but owing to the exposed position of the bar and to the heavy seas breaking over it, and also to the silting up of the mouth during the N.E. monsoon, only very small craft can then enter, but during the S.W. monsoon it can be entered by steamers of light draught.

In Dutch Borneo as well there are magnificent rivers. The same cause that has made some of the rivers so uncertain in their mouths has produced vast stretches of morass, overgrown with the nipah palm and mangrove, and infested with mosquito swarms; but the beach is almost everywhere of beautiful white sand, reaching to where the graceful casuarina tree grows as a belt above the reach of the tide. The tropical heat, added to the great rainfall, makes Borneo a vegetable paradise; indeed, it presents the appearance of one vast surface of sombre evergreen forest, starred with flowering orchids, and wreathed with creepers, of a richness perhaps unsurpassed even in South America.

The hills and ranges of upland consist of blue metamorphic limestone on which is superposed a thick series of sandstones, conglomerates, and clay-shales. Piercing these beds are granite and a variety of plutonic rocks, as diorite, porphyrite, etc. These latter are developed in greatest abundance in the antimony districts, where they are in immediate contact with the limestone that has been fissured and tortured by upheaval. The sandstone shales have also been tilted and distorted; nevertheless in places they retain their original horizontal position. They are usually found to be impregnated with peroxide of iron. It is in this formation that the cinnabar deposits occur.

Both lime and sandstone have been extensively denuded, and the latter rises in isolated tabular mountains, or short peaky trends, to an altitude occasionally of 1500 feet above the sea, the ridges separated by undulating valleys, in which

the limestone comes to the surface. Sometimes these denuded masses form low hilly tracts varying in elevation from 200 feet to 1200 feet; sometimes they appear as solitary crags, but invariably present long lines of ancient sea-cliff, and bold scarped faces, fissured and jointed in every conceivable direction.

In the intervening lowlands is a deposit of dark yellow felspathic clay varying in depth from a few feet to eighty feet and more, derived from the degradation of the hills by water. Associated with this clay and of more recent date are superficial deposits of pudding-stone and river gravels. The intrusive igneous rocks show mainly in the form of dykes, seaming the stratified rocks; consequently volcanic action took place subsequent to their deposition, but it was also antecedent to the more recent of the superficial deposits. It is in immediate connection with those plutonic dykes that we find the deposits of arsenic and cinnabar, occupying the fissures produced in the stratified rocks by volcanic upheavals, and we are led to the conclusion that these mineral lodes were deposited after the cessation of the upheaval.

Gold occurs in the form of fine sand in the alluvial deposits, and in the gravel of the rivers over a great part of Sarawak; and also in pockets of the limestone, in which it has been allowed to fall by water. Nuggets are of extremely rare occurrence, but Sir Spencer St. John mentions having seen one of seven ounces taken from the auriferous clay at Krian near Bau. The gold dust is usually in a state of finest comminution. So far no gold reef has been come upon.

In former days gold was extensively washed by Chinese at Bau and Paku in Upper Sarawak, which auriferous district commences at the confluence of the two branches of the Sarawak river, and extends back to their sources and the boundary of Dutch Borneo. As gold and antimony were known to abound here, the Chinese of Sambas and the lower Kapuas had made several endeavours to establish themselves in the district, but were much harassed by the Malays until the accession of the late Rajah Brooke, which made it possible for them to settle there and pursue in peace their business of gold mining. Then gold was

washed extensively, and the fine reservoirs and "leats" which the Chinese constructed to sluice the alluvial soil remain to this day. They increased and became a thriving community, but they were not sufficiently looked after, and, falling under the machinations of socialistic Secret Societies, gradually got out of hand and broke into open rebellion in 1857, as shall be related in the sequel. It is sufficient to say here that this ended in dire ruin to themselves, and that the few who escaped were driven over the borders; but it also ruined the gold-mining industry, and, though some of the rebels returned and others came with them, the industry never fully recovered, and later on it received a further check by the introduction of pepper planting, which gave the Chinese a more profitable occupation, and gradually Upper Sarawak became covered with gardens of this description. Though gold mining under the Chinese practically died out, modern scientific and engineering skill has now placed it in a far higher position than it had ever previously attained, or could have attained under the primitive methods of the previous workers.

Quicksilver was discovered *in situ* about the year 1871, by Messrs. Helms and Walters of the Borneo Company, who prospected over the whole of Sarawak Proper, and ultimately succeeded in tracking the small fragments of cinnabar that are scattered over the district to a hill on the right bank of the Staat river. The hill is called Tegora, and rises to an elevation of 800 feet. In the upper portion of this hill, the ore was found deposited capriciously in strains and pockets with here and there a little metallic mercury.[1]

In former years a large quantity of quicksilver was exported, but for some time this mineral product has ceased to appear as an item in the exports, the large deposit of cinnabar at Tegora having apparently been worked out. The existence of this mineral in other parts of the state is proved by traces found in several places, and the same may be said of antimony, of which there are indications of rich

[1] Everett (A. Hart). "Notes on the Distribution of the Useful Minerals in Sarawak," in the *Journal of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1878. Mr. Everett was a distinguished naturalist. He served for eight years in the Sarawak service, and died in 1898.

deposits; but the discovery of these minerals in paying quantities is a matter of chance. Antimony is still worked by the Borneo Company, Ltd., and a recent rise in the price has been an inducement to Chinese and Malay miners to increase the production, and the export of 1906 was more in quantity than it was in 1905, though small as compared with what it used to be.

Black bituminous coal, which occurs in the Tertiary strata, has been found in different parts, and two collieries are owned and worked by the Government, at Semunjan in the Sadong district, and at Brooketon. Several hundred Chinese are employed as miners under European supervision, and large sums have been expended upon machinery, etc.

Oil, a crude petroleum, has been discovered in two places; it is of good quality, and is an excellent lubricant.

It is not impossible, or indeed improbable, that diamond deposits in Sarawak will be found and exploited. No systematic operations in search of these precious stones have been attempted, the dense jungle which covers the country being an obstacle. The only people who wash for diamonds are the Malays, and these carry on their work in a very desultory and imperfect manner.

But agriculture and jungle produce have been, and will be, the main source of revenue to Sarawak, and prosperity to the country. We shall deal with these products, as well as with those that are mineral, more fully in a subsequent chapter.

The Bornean forest is so varied and so different at different hours and seasons that no description can possibly convey an adequate idea of it to those who have not known it. Infinite and ever changing are its aspects, as are the treasures it hides. Its beauties are as inexhaustible as the varieties of its productions. In the forest man feels singularly free. The more one wanders in it, the greater grows the sense of profound admiration before nature in one of its grandest aspects. The more one endeavours to study it, the more one finds in it to study. Its deep shades are sacred to the devotee of Science. Yet they afford ample food for the mind of the believer, not less than to that of the philosopher.[1]

And we would add, to the superstitious native, to whom the jungles teem with ghosts and spirits.

[1] Odoardo Beccari, *Wanderings in the Great Forests of Borneo*, 1904.

The Bornean jungles are full of life, and of the sounds of life, which are more marked in the early mornings and in the evenings. Birds are plentiful (there are some 800 species), some of beautiful plumage, but few are songsters. Insect life is very largely represented, and includes many varieties of the curious stick and leaf insects,[1] hardly to be distinguished from the twigs and leaves they mimic. Also the noisy and never tiring cicadas, whose evening concerts are almost deafening, and frogs and grasshoppers who help to swell the din. There are many varieties of beautiful butterflies, but these are to be found more in the open clearings. Though there are no dangerous animals, there are many pests, the worst being the leeches, of which there are three kinds, two that lurk in the grass and bushes, the other being aquatic—the horse-leech. Mosquitoes, stinging flies, and ants are common, and the scorpion and centipede are there as well. Snakes, though numerous, are rarely seen, for they swiftly and silently retire on the approach of man, and one variety only, the hamadryad, the great cobra or snake-eating snake, is said to be aggressive. The varieties of land and water snakes are many, there being some 120 different species. Natives often fall victims to snake bites. Pythons attain a length of over twenty feet;[2] they seldom attack man, though instances have been known of people having been killed by these reptiles, and the following story, taken from the *Sarawak Gazette*, will show how dangerous they can be. At a little village a man and his small son were asleep together. In the middle of the night the child shrieked out that he was being taken by a crocodile, and the father, to his horror, found that a snake had closed its jaws on the boy's head. With his hands he prised the reptile's jaws open and released his son; but in his turn he had to be rescued by some neighbours, for the python had wound itself around his body. Neither was much hurt.

[1] Probably the first European to discover these strange insects was the Italian Pigafetta, who in 1521 noticed them in the island of Palawan, to the north of Borneo, and thus quaintly describes them: "In this island are found certain trees, the leaves of which, when they fall off, are animated, and walk." He surmised they lived upon air.—*Magellan, Hakluyt Society.*

[2] St. John mentions one that was killed at Brooketon 26 feet 2 inches in length. —*Life in the Forests of the Far East*, 1863.

Of the wild animals in Sarawak, wild cattle and the rhinoceros have nearly disappeared before their ruthless destroyer, man; and such would have been the fate of that huge, though harmless, anthropoid, the maias, or "orang-utan," at the hands of collectors, had not the Government placed a check upon them by limiting the number each may collect.[1] Deer, the sambur, the muntjac or barking deer, and the little mouse-deer, and also wild pig, of which there are several species, abound.[2] Numerous too are the monkeys and apes, and numerous are the species; the more peculiar of the former being the proboscis monkey, a species confined to Borneo, and of the latter the gentle gibbons, who announce the dawn, making the woods ring and echo with their melodious gurgling whoops. There are two kinds of diminutive bears, the tree-leopard, wild cat, the scaly ant-eater, the porcupine, the otter, the lemur, and other small animals, including the flying fox, flying squirrel, flying lizard, flying frog, a peculiar kind of rat with a tail which bears a close resemblance to a feather,[3] and huge toads nine inches in height.[4] But to the casual traveller in the dense jungle with but a limited view, excepting an occasional monkey, or a pig or deer startled from its lair, few of these animals will be visible.

Of the valuable products of the jungle it will be sufficient to note here that gutta, camphor, cutch, and dammar-producing trees abound; also creepers from which rubber is extracted; and rattans of various kinds. There are trees from the nuts of which excellent oil is expressed; and many kinds of useful woods, some exceeding hard and durable, and some ornamental.

Man's greatest enemy is the crocodile, and this voracious saurian becomes a dangerous foe when, driven perhaps by scarcity of other food, it has once preyed upon man, for, like

[1] With regard to the collection of orchids it has also been found necessary to do this. Collectors would ruthlessly destroy all orchids, especially the rarer kinds, which they could not carry away, in order to prevent others from collecting these.

[2] In about 1825 a large bone was found in a cave at Bau which was pronounced to be that of an elephant. These animals are common in parts of N. Borneo, and Pigafetta found them at Bruni in 1521.

[3] The *Ptilocercus Lowii*, only found in Borneo. It has been awarded a genus all to itself, and is one of the rarest of Bornean curiosities.—J. Hewitt, *Sarawak Gazette* September 1, 1908.

[4] "According to Mr. Boulanger, Borneo can boast of producing the longest legged frog and the longest legged toad in the world."—*Idem.*

the tiger, it then becomes a man-hunter and man-eater. It will lurk about landing and bathing-places for prey; will snatch a man bodily from a boat; and one has been known to seize a child out of its mother's arms while she was bathing it. The *Sarawak Gazette* records numerous deaths due to crocodiles, though by no means all that happen, and many thrilling adventures with these reptiles. Two we will give as interesting instances of devotion and presence of mind. A little Malay boy, just able to toddle, was larking in the mud at low water when he was seized by a crocodile, which was making for the water with its screaming little victim in its jaws, when the child's sister, a girl of twelve, and his brother of eight, rushed to his assistance. The boy hopelessly tried to stop the crocodile by clinging to one of its fore-paws, but the girl jumped upon the brute's back, and gradually working her way to its eyes which were then just above water, succeeded in gouging out one with her fingers. This caused the crocodile promptly to drop its prey, but only just in time, as it was on the point of gliding into deep water. By the girl's vigorous intervention it not only lost its prey but also its life, for two men coming up hacked the brute to pieces. The little heroine had remembered the story of how her grandfather had formerly saved his life in the same way. To scoop out the eyes is the only chance of escape for one taken, and it must be done promptly. The little boy was scarcely hurt. The girl's courageous deed duly received a graceful recognition from the Ranee.

Another girl, a Dayak girl this time, rescued her mother, who was dragged out of a boat, in which they were together, by a large crocodile. She threw herself upon the monster, and by thrusting her fingers into its eyes compelled the brute, after a short but sharp struggle, to release its prey.

Death caused by a crocodile is one of the most horrible of deaths, and it is often a protracted one, as the victim is borne along above water for some distance, then taken down, bashed against some sunken log, and brought up again. "May I be killed by a crocodile if I am guilty" is a common invocation made by Malays in protestation of their innocence; in other words, they invoke the most dread-

ful death that comes within their ken. So did once a young Malay woman in the Simanggang Court on being convicted of a serious crime. That evening, whilst she was bathing, a smothered cry, that she had barely time to utter, announced that her prayer had been heard.

There are several kinds of crocodiles, broad and long snouted. In the Perak Museum is a specimen nearly twenty-five feet in length, but the longest that has been caught in Sarawak, and authentically measured, was nineteen feet. The Government gives a reward for killing these pests, which is paid upon some 250 to 300 annually brought to the police station at Kuching. More are killed in the various districts of which no record is kept.

Sharks of several species abound, but cases of injury by these are very rare.

Saw-fish are also common, and with their long spiny saws are dangerous creatures. A fisherman was killed by one of these at the mouth of the Sadong; he was in a small canoe when the fish, which he had cut at with his knife, struck him a blow on his neck with its saw, from which he died almost immediately.

Excellent fish are abundant, such as mackerel and herring, considerably larger than the English varieties, pomfret, barbel, soles, mullets, etc., and some of beautiful colours; also crabs, prawns, and oysters. The dugong (Malay duyong), the sea-cow, is rare in Sarawak, but common in North Borneo, as is also the whale; in Sarawak the latter are occasionally stranded on the beach. Turtles abound; these are preserved for the sake of their eggs, which are considered a great delicacy.

We will now consider the races that occupy Sarawak territory; and the following brief ethnological notes with regard to those of Indonesian stock will be all that is necessary for the purposes of this book; to attempt anything like an accurate classification of the many tribes and sub-tribes which differentiate the heterogeneous population of the country would be beyond its scope, even were it possible to trace the divergence of the cognate tribes from the original stock, and of the sub-tribes from the tribes.

That there may have been earlier inhabitants of Borneo than those now existing in the island is possible. Traces of neolithic man have been found, but these may be due to the first settlers having brought with them stone weapons cherished as charms. Of paleolithic man not a trace has been discovered.[1] To attempt to determine the flow of mankind into the country, or to decide which of the tribes of Indonesian stock now found in Sarawak was the first to occupy the soil, is to undertake an impossible task.[2] It may be accepted that the most barbarous peoples, the Ukits, Bukitans, Punans, and other fast vanishing tribes, were the earliest inhabitants of whom we know anything, and that they were immigrants. But whence they came we know not. These tribes are all more or less related in language and customs, and in Borneo difference in names does not always denote any essential racial distinction.

As an instance of this we have the Lugats, of whom only a very few are left, the Lisums, the Bliuns, a tribe that has quite died out, the Segalangs, and the Seru Dayaks of the Kalaka, a tribe which is fast disappearing. The above sub-tribes take their name from rivers widely apart, and though their names differ they are of the same race, sub-tribes of the Ukits. Their tradition is that three or four hundred years ago the Ukits lived in the Lugat (now the Gat) river, a branch of the Baleh (hence we have the Lugats now living in the Anap), but they were driven out by the Kayans. Some went to the Lisum river (hence we have the Lisums), and some to Kapit, where they built strong houses on the site of the present fort, but these they were eventually forced to evacuate, and again they migrated down river, first to Tujong, near the Kanowit, and afterwards farther down again to Bunut, by Benatang. From Bunut they were driven out by their implacable foes, and they dispersed to Segalang (in the Rejang delta), to Bliun (in the Kanowit),

[1] "Mr. St. John (*Forests of the Far East*, p. 190) mentions stones or pebbles of a dark colour considered by the natives as sacred. Some such, found at Quop, were said to have been lost during the civil wars. They are possibly paleolithic implements."—Beccari, *op. cit.* p. 367.

[2] The late Rajah wrote in 1838: "We know scarcely anything of these varieties of the human race beyond the bare fact of their existence." We have since learnt something of their languages and customs; of their origin nothing.

and to Seru in the Kalaka.[1] This tradition is supported by the strong evidence of language, and there is little reason for disregarding it. After being driven out of Lugat, some of the Ukits went over to the Kapuas, where, as in the Baleh, to which river some eventually returned, they are

UKIT CHIEF, WIFE AND CHILD.

still known as Ukits. The Bliuns, Segalangs, and Serus became civilised owing to contact with the Malays and Melanaus. The Ukits, Bukitans, and Punans, with the exception of the Punan Bah of Balui, are the wildest of all

[1] Mr. F. D. de Rozario. The *Sarawak Gazette*, September 2, 1901. Mr. de Rozario, the officer in charge of Kapit Fort, has been in the Government service for some fifty years, of which nearly all have been spent in the Upper Rejang, and his knowledge of the natives, their customs and languages, is unique.

the races in the island. The Ukits are light in complexion; tall and well knit, and better looking than other inland tribes. Formerly they did not reside in houses, or cultivate the soil, but roamed about in the jungle, and subsisted on wild fruit and the animals they killed. But some of these have begun to erect poor dwellings, and do a little elementary farming. They are expert with the blow-pipe, and in the manufacture of the upas-poison, with which the points of their needle-like arrows are tinged. But it is quite open to question whether these poor savages may not be a degenerate race, driven from their homes and from comparative civilisation by more powerful races that followed and hunted them from their farms to the jungle. Beccari (*op. cit.* p. 363) says that they "are savages in the true name of the word, but they are neither degraded nor inferior races in the series of mankind. Their primitive condition depends more than anything else on their nomadic or wandering life, and on the ease with which they live on the produce of the forests, and on that of the chase which the sumpitan (blow-pipe) procures for them. This has no doubt contributed to keep them from associating with their fellow-beings, and from settling in villages or erecting permanent houses. I believe that these, although they must be considered as the remnants of an ancient Bornean people, are not descended from autochthonous savages, but are rather the present-day representatives of a race which

A PUNAN.

has become savage." And Beccari is of opinion "that it is difficult to deny that Borneo has had older and perhaps more primitive inhabitants." The natives have legends of former races having occupied the land; the most powerful were, according to the Punans, the Antu-Jalan, who lived in the Balui, around the mouth of the Belaga, where the fort of that name now stands. They disappeared, but have now returned in the persons of the white men. So the Punans believe, and other tribes hug other myths. These savage people are, or rather were, the bitter enemies of the Dayaks, and a terror to them. Silently and unperceived, they would steal on their hereditary enemies whilst these latter were collecting jungle produce, or employed on their farms, and wound them to death with their poisoned arrows.

In former days, when they were more powerful, the Bukitans would openly attack the Dayaks, and as late as 1856 they destroyed one of the large communal Dayak houses on the Krian, and also attacked the Serikei Dayaks. The Ukits do not take heads, and the Punans do not tattoo. The latter and the Bukitans are clever makers of rattan mats, which are in demand by Europeans and Chinese. The Ukits and the Bukitans reside on the upper waters of the Rejang, Baleh, and Kapuas; and the Punans in the Baram and Balui.

The Banyoks and the Seduans are, like the Segalangs, with whom they have intermixed, probably off-shoots of the Ukit tribe. They have recently merged, and occupy the same village in the Rejang below Sibu fort. Like the Tanjongs and the Kanowits they are clever basket makers.

The Sians, another off-shoot of the Ukits, live below Belaga fort.[1]

All these small tribes inhabiting the interior, though a few are found near the coast, are dwindling away, mainly in consequence of in-and-in breeding. Of some of the tribes of the same stock only a few families are left, and in others only a few people, while one or two have totally disappeared within quite recent years.

The next Indonesian tribes to follow were the Kayans

[1] See note 2, page 18.

and then the Kenyahs, two that are closely allied, and both, according to tradition, came from the south, probably from the Celebes. They took possession of the Belungan (or Batang Kayan) river-basin, and overflowed into those of Baram and Balui (the right hand branch of the Rejang). These powerful tribes found these river-basins unoccupied except by scattered families of the tribes above mentioned, whom they drove into the jungle. In the Baram they remained undisturbed, as also in the Rejang till recent years. Down the latter river they spread as far as Kapit; at that time both the Sea-Dayaks and Malays were there, and over them the Kayans domineered, driving the former from their settlements at Ngmah,[1] and harassing the latter in the Kanowit, and even in the Sekrang. Eventually, however, the Kayans were forced to fall back before the ever increasing Dayaks, and to retire to the head-waters of the Balui, and now, with the exception of one small settlement, all reside above the Belaga.

When we consider the large area occupied by the tribes of Kayans and Kenyahs, who may be classed together, it will be seen how important they are. Besides inhabiting the upper waters of the Baram and Rejang, they are found in very large numbers on the Batang Kayan. The Mahkam (Koti or Coti) is also thickly inhabited by Kayans, and many live on the Barito (Banjermasin), and on the Kapuas. The Kayans and Kenyahs are tattooed, as are most of the savage people of Indonesian origin in the interior. When the children are young the lobes of the ears are pierced, and by the insertion of heavy lead or copper rings the lobes become gradually so distended as to hang down to the shoulders, and, with elderly women, often lower. That this is a very old custom, and not peculiar to these people, is shown by the sculptures in the ancient Boro Budor temple in Java, where men and women are figured with such

[1] The Indra Lila (brother of the Lila Pelawan, who was the present Rajah's Malay chief at Lingga over fifty years ago), was their chief. Trouble arose owing to Akam Nipa, the celebrated Kayan chief, who will be noticed hereafter, having fallen in love with a Malay girl of rank. His suit being rejected, he threatened to forcibly abduct the lady, a threat which he could have carried out with ease, so the Malays fled with her to Lingga. This occurred some eighty years ago.

elongated ear lobes, having ear pendants and plugs exactly similar to those in use by the Kayans and Kenyahs. Most Indonesian tribes of the interior retain this fashion.[1] These Kayans and Kenyahs are on a slightly higher grade of civilisation than the Sea-Dayaks, building finer houses, having more rule and order among themselves, and being expert in the manufacture of excellent weapons, extracting their iron for that purpose from the native ore. In character they are vindictive and cruel, but brave, and not without some good qualities. Formerly they practised hideous cruelties on their captives and slaves, and impalement was a common form of punishment. The women were even more barbarous than the men, being the most ingenious and inhuman in devising tortures. The Kayans under Sarawak rule have been checked in these matters, and human sacrifices have become a thing of the past. But that these propensities are only dormant is instanced by a case that occurred but a few years ago, far up the Balui. Four young Dayaks, survivors of a party of gutta-percha collectors, who had been cut off and killed by the Punans, after wandering for many days in the jungle, arrived destitute and starving at a Kayan house, and asked for food and shelter. Instead, the Kayans bound the young men, and, after breaking their legs and arms, handed them over to the women, who slowly despatched them by hacking them to pieces with little knives. And in the Baram, in 1882, a Kayan chief caused two captives to be

KAYAN GIRL, SHOWING ELONGATED EARS.

[1] One of Magellan's chroniclers records that in 1521 men were found in Gilo (Gilolo or Jilolo, to the east of, and near to the Celebes), "with ears so long and pendulous that they reached to their shoulders.—*Magellan, Hakluyt Society.* Marsden, *History of Sumatra*, says that the people of Neas island off the west coast of Sumatra elongate their ears in the same manner; so do the Sagais of Belungan. The sculptures above mentioned, and the fact that this curious custom still exists in southern India, point to it being one of Hindu origin.

bound and thrown down from the lofty verandah of his house to the ground, where they were decapitated—quite in Ashantee manner.[1]

Among the Kayans and Kenyahs a broad distinction exists between the classes. There are but the chiefs and their families, and only serfs and slaves under them. The chiefs are not chosen by the people, as is the case among the Dayaks. They assume their position by right of birth, or by might. The position of the serf is little better than that of the slave, and all they may gain by their industry is seized by the chiefs. It is the difference that existed in Germany between the Freie and the Unfreie; in England in Saxon times between the thegn and the villein. Although the Kayans take heads in warfare, they do not value them as do the Dayaks, and will part with them to the latter; and they are not head-hunters in the strict sense of the term. The Kayans are a decreasing race, not so the Kenyahs. Both are capable of improvement, especially the latter; and they are improving, notably in the Baram, where they are directly under the control of the Government, since that river district was ceded to Sarawak in 1883.

The Tanjongs, Kanowits, Kajamans, and Sekapans,[2] are cognate tribes, probably of the same stock as the Kayans and Kenyahs. Formerly they were large tribes, but are now each reduced to a solitary village. They are to be found only on the Rejang. The dialects of the two first are intermediary between those of the Melanaus and the Kayans, and they live in an intermediary position. The other two tribes live close to Belaga fort in the Kayan country; their dialects vary.

The Malohs of Kapuas in Dutch Borneo formerly had a large village at Kanowit, but nearly all have returned to their own country, and the tribe is now represented by a sprinkling only among the Sea-Dayaks. They are wonderfully skilled workers in brass and copper, and manufacture

[1] Human sacrifices are still in vogue amongst the Kayans and Kenyahs in the Batang Kayan and Mahkam rivers.

[2] The Kajamans, Sekapans, Sians, and Lanans are said to have been the first to cross over from the Bantang Kayan (Belungan) into the Balui (Rejang). They were probably then one tribe.

the peculiar brass corsets worn by the Sea-Dayak women, and their armlets, anklets, leg and ear-rings, and other personal ornaments; and they have been known to turn their talents to making counterfeit coin. They bear a great reputation for bravery, and are dangerous men to cross.

The Lanans live amongst the Kayans, to whom they are allied, in the Balui, and have seven or eight villages.

The Sebops and Madangs are Kenyah sub-tribes.

The Melanau, a large and most important tribe inhabiting the coast between Kedurong point and the mouths of the Rejang, is also of Indonesian stock, though, like the Malays, but in a lesser degree, they are of mixed breed. In speech these people are allied to the Kayans, and are regarded by some as a branch tribe. Certain of their customs are similar, and if they differ from the Kayans in many respects, this is due partly to environment, but mainly to the majority of them having embraced Muhammadanism, and to their having intermarried with the Malays, with whom they are now to a certain extent assimilated in customs. They cultivate sago on a large scale, and since the exit of their old Bruni rulers—or rather oppressors—are able to enjoy the fruits of their labour, and have increased their plantations considerably. At Bruit, Matu, Oya, Muka,[1] and Bintulu, there are jungles of sago palms, and these places supply by far the largest proportion of the world's consumption of sago. The people being industrious and thrifty are well off. The above-named places are now large towns, and Muka is as large as Bruni. The Melanaus are skilled in working iron, are good carpenters, and excellent boat builders. Though they are by nature, like the cognate Kayans, vindictive and quarrelsome, serious crime is not common among them, and they are a law-abiding people. Formerly among the Kayans and Melanaus when one of their houses was about to be built, a hole was dug in the ground, a slave woman together with some beads placed in it, and the first iron-wood

[1] *Muka* is the Malay for face. The word has been carried into the English language as mug, contemptuously "an ugly mug," from the Sanskrit word *muhka*, the face.

supporting post was levered up, and then driven through her into the ground. This was an oblation to the Earth Spirit.

The Kadayans do not appear to be allied to any of the races in N.W. Borneo; those in Sarawak have migrated from Bruni within recent times to escape oppression. They are a peaceful and agricultural race, and many of them are Muhammadans.[1]

MURUTS.

The Muruts and Bisayas are considerable tribes inhabiting the Limbang, Trusan, and Lawas rivers in Sarawak, and beyond. They are of Indonesian stock, and of them a full and interesting account has been given by Sir Spenser St. John in his *Life in the Forests of the Far East.*

The heads of all these tribes are dolichocephalic or boat-shaped. They are yellow-stained, with hair either straight or slightly waved.

[1] Mr. E. A. W. Cox, formerly Resident of the Trusan, and latterly of the Bintulu, says the Kadayan tradition is that many generations back they were brought from Deli in Sumatra by a former Sultan of Bruni. They have always been the immediate followers of the sultans, forming their main bodyguard. They have no distinctive language of their own, and talk a low Bruni patois; their dress is peculiar; and their system of rice cultivation is far in advance of all other Borneans.

The Land-Dayaks, so named by Europeans in consequence of their not being accustomed to go to sea, or even to the use of boats, either for trading or piratical purposes, number several tribes, with some variations in language. They occupy localities up the rivers Sadong, Samarahan, Sarawak, and Lundu. The remains found among them of Hinduism, such as a stone-shaped bull,[1] and other carved monumental stones, and the name of their deity, Jewata, as also the refusal among them to touch the flesh of cattle and deer, and the cremation of their dead, show that they must have been brought into intimate contact with the Hindus, probably at the time when the Hindu-Javanese Empire of Majapahit extended to Borneo.[2] In customs and appearance they differ considerably from the other tribes. They have a tradition that they arrived from the north in large ships, possibly from Siam or Cochin-China. Having been oppressed and persecuted and hunted for their heads by the Sea-Dayaks they have retreated to the tops of hills and rocky eminences.

Of the Land-Dayak Captain the Hon. H. Keppel[3] says:—

In character he is mild and tractable, hospitable when he is well used, grateful for kindness, industrious, honest, and simple; neither treacherous nor cunning, and so truthful that the word of one of them might safely be taken before the oath of half a dozen Borneans

[1] The Hindu sacred bull.

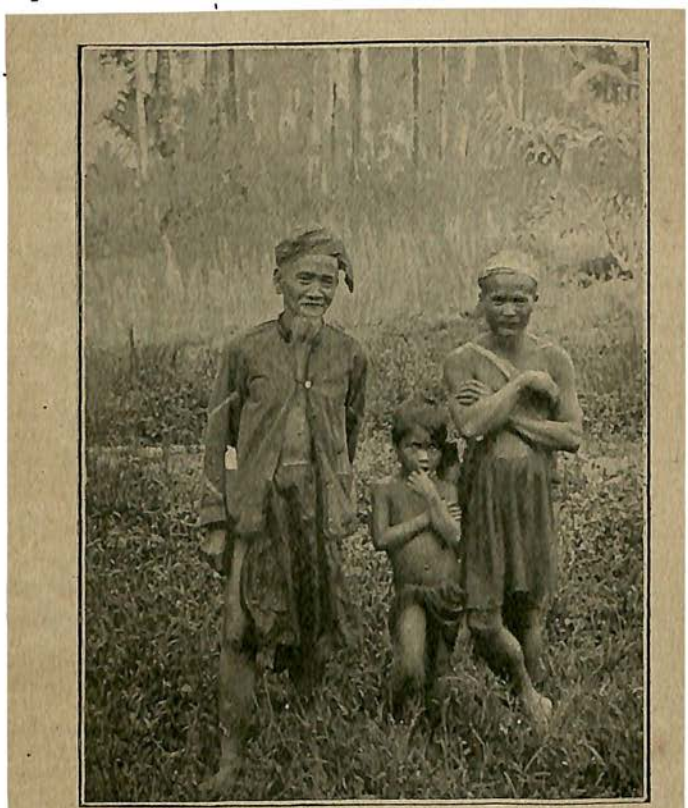
[2] Writing of the *Rafflesia*, "those extraordinary parasitical plants, whose huge and startling conspicuous flowers spring from the ground like gigantic mushrooms," Beccari (*op. cit.* p. 102) says, "The Land-Dayaks called the variety he found at Poi (and which he named R. Tuan-Mudæ, in honour of the present Rajah) 'Bua pakma'; evidently a corruption of 'patma' or 'padma,' the sacred lotus (*Nelumbian speciosum*) of the Hindus, which is not a native of Borneo. This is, no doubt, one of the many traces of the ancient faith once professed by the Dayaks, who have preserved the memory of the emblematical flower, transferring its name to that of another plant conspicuous for its size and singular appearance. In Java, as well as in Sumatra, the *Rafflesia* is known as 'Patma'; but there the fact is not surprising, for the prevalence of Hinduism in those islands is a matter of not very remote history." Pakma or patma is the Malay name for the lotus.

The late Sir Hugh Low notes that the Land-Dayaks, who (in common with most of the inland tribes) regulate their farming seasons by the motions of the Pleiades, call that constellation *Sakara*, probably from the *Batara Sakra* of the Hindu-Javan mythology, to whose particular care the earth was confided.—*Sarawak.*

Hindu gold ornaments and a Persian coin, bearing a date corresponding with the year 960 A.D., have been discovered up the Sarawak river, and some in the centre of the Land-Dayak country, which shows that the people of the ancient Hindu-Javan settlement at Santubong must have spread into the interior, and have mixed with the natives.

[3] Afterwards Admiral of the Fleet.

(Malays). In their dealings they are very straightforward and correct, and so trustworthy that they rarely attempt, even after a lapse of years, to evade payment of a just debt. On the reverse of this picture there is little unfavourable to be said, and the wonder is that they have learned so little deceit and falsehood where the examples before them have been so rife.



LAND-DAYAK CHIEF, WITH HIS SON AND GRANDSON.

It is difficult, perhaps impossible now, to assign the position of the Land-Dayaks with regard to the other native peoples. Their language is quite different from the others, and in many other essentials they differ.

Distinct from all these races in physical character and language are the Sea-Dayaks. These are proto-Malays, that is to say they belong to the same ethnic family, but represent that stock in a purer, less mixed stage. Radically their language is the same as the Malay. They are brachycephalic,

bullet-headed, with more or less flattened noses, are straight-haired, almost beardless, with skin of olive hue, or the colour of new fallen leaves. They migrated from the west, probably from Sumatra, at a period previous to the conversion of the Malays to Islam, for their language, which with slight dialectic differences, is purely Malay, contains no Arabic except of very recent introduction. The Sea-Dayak inhabits the Batang Lupar, Saribas, Kalaka, and Rejang rivers. They are gradually spreading into the rivers of the north-east, and there are now a good many in the Oya, Muka, Tatau, and Baram districts.

SEA-DAYAK CHIEF.
(The Pengulu Dalam, Munan)

A Sea-Dayak is a clean built man, upright in gait, not tall, the average height being 5 ft. 3 inches. The nose is somewhat flat, the hair straight with no curl in it. The face is generally pleasing from the frankness and good nature that show in it. The women have good figures, light and elastic; well-formed busts, with interesting, indeed often pretty, faces; the skins are, as already stated, of so light a brown as to be almost yellow. They have lustrous dark eyes and black, straight hair.

The Dayaks are very fond of their parents, brothers, sisters, and of their children, and often a strong attachment exists between man and wife that lasts for life. The Dayaks have each but one wife, but it does not follow by any means that the first union lasts. A young couple may find

incompatibility of temper after a week or two, and the union is dissolved on the plea of a dream inimical to its continuance.

Incest is considered to be the worst of crimes, bringing a curse on the country. Both incest and bigamy were formerly punishable by a cruel death, now by heavy fines, but for the former offence the fine is far heavier than for the latter.

The Sea-Dayaks are most hospitable, indeed a breach of hospitality is regarded as a punishable offence. They obtained their designation from the English who first came in contact with them, on account of their skill in navigating the sea along the coast, although living inland, and to differentiate them from the Dayaks of Sarawak proper, who were styled Land-Dayaks, because these latter were inexpert boatmen, and very few of them could paddle or swim. As shown farther on, Dayak really signifies an *inland man.*

The Sea-Dayak is now the dominant race in Sarawak, and in time will become so over the whole of the north-west of Borneo. The spread of this stock in former years appears to have been slow, owing to continual intestine wars, but since the advent of the white man, the discontinuance of these feuds, and the forced adoption of a peaceable life, these people have increased enormously in numbers. Fifty years ago there were but few of them to be found outside the Batang Lupar, Saribas, and Kalaka river-basins, but now, though the population on these rivers has grown considerably, it is less than that of the same race on the Rejang alone, and they are spreading into the Oya, Muka, Tatau, and Baram river-basins. The Melanau population of the two first-named rivers live entirely either on the coast or near to it, and the Dayaks found the upper reaches unoccupied.

The Sea-Dayaks have many good qualities that are more or less lacking in the other inland tribes. They are industrious, honest and thrifty, sober and cheerful, and comparatively moral. But the characteristics that mainly distinguish them are energy and independence. They are exceedingly sensitive, especially the women, and will seek refuge from shame in suicide;[1] like the Malays the men

[1] Disappointment in marriage, and unkindness or harshness on the part of relatives are common causes of suicide by man or woman, but the most common motive is

will sometimes, though not often, *amok* when suffering from depression caused by grief, shame, or jealousy, for in the East this peculiar form of insanity is by no means confined to the Malay as is popularly supposed.[1] Amongst them general social equality exists, and it is extended to their women. They do not suffer their chiefs to abuse their powers as the Kayan and Kenyah chiefs are allowed to do, but they are quite ready to submit to them when justness and uprightness is shown. They are superstitious and restless, and require a firm hand over them, and, "being like truant children, take a great advantage of kindness and forbearance, and become more rebellious if threats are not carried into execution." This was the advice given by the present Rajah to the Netherland officials some years ago. Their inherited desire for human skulls, and their old savage methods of obtaining them, still, in a degree, have a strong hold on the Sea-Dayak character, but against this it can be said to their credit that they are free from cruelty, and never torture a captive as do the Kayans and other tribes. They are kindly to their captives, and treat them as members of the family; and they were a peaceable people before they were led astray by the half-bred Arabs and the Malays.

The Sea-Dayaks are the collectors of jungle produce, in search of which they go on expeditions far into the interior —to Sumatra, the Malayan States, and North Borneo—and are away for months at a time.

The Dayak custom of head-hunting is founded on the same principle as that of scalp-hunting among the North-American Indians. A young man formerly found it difficult to obtain a wife till he had got at least one head to present

shame, particularly in cases of an unmarried woman, when *enceinte*, being unable to prove to the tribe who the father of her child is. A whole family has been known to poison themselves to escape the consequences and disgrace which would have befallen them owing to one of them having been the accidental cause of a long communal house being destroyed by fire. Suicide is invariably committed by eating the poisonous root of the tuba plant, *derris elliptica*.

[1] The worst on record in Sarawak was committed in 1894 by a half-bred Chinaman (his mother was a Segalang, and he was brought up as one) at Seduan village, three miles from Sibu, in the Rejang. This man, who had just been discharged from jail, arose in the middle of the night, and speared or cut down all the inmates of the house—thirteen women and children, of whom only two or three survived. He was shot by Mr. Q. A. Buck, then the Resident at Sibu (joined 1874, retired 1899), who was quickly on the spot, and was the means of preventing a further loss of life.

to the object of his heart as token of his prowess; but it was quite immaterial whether the head was that of man or woman, of old or young. If a Dayak had lost a near relative it became his duty to obtain a head, for until this was accomplished, and a head feast had been given, the family must remain in mourning, and the departed relative would have no attendant in Sembayan (the shades); and so in the event of a chief dying it was incumbent upon the warriors of the tribe to procure one or more heads, in order that his spirit should be properly attended by the spirits of those sacrificed in his honour. Thus head-hunting became more or less a natural instinct, and an obligatory duty.

SEA-DAYAK GIRL.

The ancient Chinese jars,[1] held in great esteem among the natives, and very highly prized, being supposed to be possessed of supernatural powers and healing virtues,[2] are of various kinds and value. The Gusi is the most valued, and is treated with great care and veneration, and stands about eighteen inches high. Then comes the Lingka, then the Benaga,[3] about two feet high, ornamented with the Chinese dragon. The Rusa[4] is the least valued. From a note made in 1890 these are the lowest prices they fetch—Gusi tuak, $1000; Gusi bulan, $700; Gusi chenda-

[1] The Sea-Dayaks say that they were constructed by the gods when they made the sky, out of a small surplus of the blue.

[2] St. John, *op. cit.*, mentions that the late Sultan Mumin of Bruni had an ancient jar which was reputed to be able to speak, and that it moaned sorrowfully the night before his first wife died. He refused £2000 for it.

[3] *Naga*, a dragon; *benagá*, having a dragon.

[4] Meaning a deer in Malay and Sea-Dayak.

num, $500; Galagiau, $400; Lingka, $310; Rusa, $150, In 1890 $7 = £1. These jars are all brown in colour. The Dayaks and Kayans possess a few fine blue and white, and pink and white, old Chinese jars, some over five feet in height.

About forty years ago an enterprising Chinese petty dealer took samples of the jars to China and had clever imitations made. He realised a large sum by the sale, and started as a merchant on a large scale, grew rich, waxed fat, and became the leading and wealthiest Chinese merchant in Kuching. The Malays are clever in "faking" jars, especially such as are cracked, but the Dayaks are not now to be deceived by them.

The Dayak village, like those of all interior tribes, is a communal establishment. It does not consist of separate huts occupied by any one family, but of large common halls on platforms, sometimes 800 ft. long, upon which the dwelling-rooms abut. They are constructed of wood, and are supported on poles sometimes 20 ft. to 40 ft. above the ground, the poles being from 6 to 18 inches in diameter. The largest will contain some 300 people. The following is a description of the Dayak village of Tunggang from the late Rajah's journal:—

Tunyang[1] stands on the left hand (going up) close to the margin of the stream, and was enclosed by a slight stockade. Within this defence there was *one* enormous house for the whole population. The exterior of the defence between it and the river was occupied by sheds for prahus (boats), and at each extremity were one or two houses belonging to Malay residents.

The common habitation, as rude as it is enormous, measures 594 ft. in length, and the front room or street is the entire length of the building, and 21 feet broad. The back part is divided by mat partitions into the private apartments of the various families, and of these there are forty-five separate doors leading from the public apartment. The widowers and the young unmarried men occupy the public room, as only those with wives are entitled to the advantage of a separate room. The floor of the edifice is raised twelve feet from the ground, and the means of ascent is by the trunk of a tree with notches cut in it—a most difficult, steep, and awkward ladder. In front is a terrace fifty feet broad, running partially along

[1] A misprint for "Tunggang."

the front of the building, formed like the floors, of split bamboo. This platform, as well as the front room, besides the regular inhabitants, is the resort of dogs, birds, monkeys, and fowls, and presents a glorious scene of confusion and bustle. Here the ordinary occupations of domestic labour are carried on. There were 200 men, women, and children counted in the room, and in front, whilst we were there in the middle of the day; and allowing for those who were abroad, or then in their own rooms, the whole community cannot be reckoned at less than 400 souls. The apartment of their chief is situated nearly in the centre of the building, and is larger than any other. In front of it nice mats were spread on the occasion of our visit, whilst over our heads dangled about thirty ghastly skulls, according to the custom of these people.

The Malay is the latest immigrant. He is of mixed breed, and the link that holds the Malays together is religion, for they are Muhammedans, whereas the Kayans, Land and Sea-Dayaks, and other tribes, are pagans. To accept their own traditions, the Bruni Malays came from Johore, whereas the Sarawak Malays, like those of the Malay peninsula, came direct from the ancient kingdom of Menangkabau. Between them there is a very marked difference in language, character, and appearance. Whence the proto-Malay stock came is a moot point, but it may be of Mongolian origin, subsequently blended with many other distinct ethnic types, such as the Arab and Hindu, and in the case of the Bornean Malay with the Indonesian peoples of their and the neighbouring islands. The Malays form the main population of Kuching, the capital, and of the towns Sadong, Simanggang, Kalaka, and Sibu. They have villages on the Lundu, Saribas, and lower Rejang, are scattered along the coast between Capes Datu and Sirik, and are to be found in the principal settlements beyond. The Malay has been very variously judged. The Malay Pangiran, or noble, was rapacious, cruel, and often cowardly. But he had a grace of manner, a courtesy, and hospitality that were pleasing as a varnish. The evil repute that the Malay has acquired has been due to his possession of power, and to his unscrupulous use of it to oppress the aboriginal races. But the Malay out of power is by no means an objectionable character. Sir James Brooke, the first Rajah, thus paints him :—

The feeling of the Malay fostered by education is acute, and his passions are roused if shame be put upon him; indeed the dread of shame amounts to a disease, and the evil is that it has taken a wrong direction, being more the dread of exposure or abuse, than shame or contrition for any offence. Like other Asiatics truth is a rare quality among them, and they have neither principle nor conscience when they have the means of oppressing an infidel.

They are thus depicted by Mr. Horace St. John in a work somewhat ambitiously entitled, *The Indian Archipelago, its History and present State*, vol. ii. p. 267 (published 1853). Under the heading "Malays," we find the following:—

The Malays are Mahomedans, living under the rule of the Prophet's descendants, a mongrel race of tyrants, gamblers, opium-smokers, pirates, and chiefs, who divide their time between cock-fighting, smoking, concubines, and collecting taxes.

That Mr. Horace St. John had never been in the Archipelago to which his history relates, was doubtless a matter of little consequence to many of his home-staying contemporaries. Sir Spenser St. John, brother to the author of the above-quoted *Indian Archipelago, etc.*, who certainly wrote from a long personal experience of the people and country, offers us in his *Forests of the Far East* an opinion on the character and conduct of the Malay from which every one who has lived amongst these people will find no important cause to differ. Sir Spenser writes:—

The Malays are faithful to their relatives and devotedly attached to their children. Remarkably free from crimes, and when they are committed they generally arise from jealousy. Brave when well led, they inspire confidence in their commanders; they are highly sensitive to dishonour, and tenacious as regards their conduct towards each other, and being remarkably polite in manner, they render agreeable all intercourse with them. Malays are generally accused of great idleness, and in some sense they deserve it; they do not like continuous work, but they do enough to support themselves and families in comfort, and real poverty is unknown among them.

The author here refers to the Malays of Sarawak.

Sir W. H. Treacher,[1] who knows the Malay intimately,

[1] Late Resident-General of the Federated Malay States.

paints him in favourable colours, now that he is restrained from tyrannising over the weak. He says :—

I am frequently asked if treachery is not one of their characteristics, and I unhesitatingly answer *No.* This particular misconception was probably initiated by the original merchant-adventurers, and we can imagine what a reception a body of strange, uninvited, white infidels would receive at the hands of Mahomedan Malays, whose system of warfare, taking its rise from the nature of the thickly jungle-covered country they inhabit, is adapted more for ambuscade than for fighting at close quarters. Add to that, being Mahomedans, they were by their religion justified in indulging in piracy and murder where the victims were infidels. The Malay is possessed of at least as much passive courage as the average Englishman, and is probably less troubled by the fear of death and the hereafter than many Christians.

On the other hand I must admit that the Malay, owing to his environment—the balmy climate making no severe calls upon him in the matters either of food, artificial warmth, or clothing, has not the bustling energy of the white man, nor the greed for amassing wealth of the Chinaman, nor does he believe in putting forth unnecessary energy for a problematical gain; he is like the English tramp who was always willing—that is, to look on at other people working, or like that one who complained that he was an unfortunate medium, too light for heavy work, and too heavy for light work.

The natural savagery of the Malay continually threatens to break out, and not infrequently does so in the form of the *amok* (running amuck), the national Malay method of committing suicide.

Apart from this tendency, when under control the Malay character has much in common with the Mongol, being, under ordinary circumstances, gentle, peaceable, obedient, and loyal, but at the same time proud and sensitive, and with strangers suspicious and reserved.

The Malays can be faithful and trustworthy, and they are active and clever. Serious crime among them is not common now, nor is thieving. They have a bad propensity of running into debt, and obtaining advances under engagements which they never fulfil. They make good servants and valuable policemen. All the Government steamers are officered and manned throughout by Malays,

and none could desire to have better crews. They are the principal fishermen and woodsmen. Morality is perhaps not a strong point with them, but drinking is exceptional, and gambling is not as prevalent as it was, nor do they indulge in opium smoking.

With regard to the Chinaman, it will be well to let the present Rajah speak from his own experience. He says that—

John Chinaman as a race are an excellent set of fellows, and a poor show would these Eastern countries make without their energetic presence. They combine many good, many dangerous, and it must be admitted, many bad qualities. They are given to be overbearing and insolent (unless severely kept down) nearly to as great a degree as Europeans of the rougher classes. They will cheat their neighbours and resort to all manner of deception *on principle*. But their redeeming qualities are comparative charitableness and liberality; a fondness for improvements; and, except in small mercantile affairs or minor trading transactions, they are honest.

They, in a few words, possess the wherewithal to be good fellows, and are more fit to be compared to Europeans than any other race of Easterns.

They have been excluded as much as possible from gaining a footing in Batavia,[1] under the plea of their dangerous and usurious pursuits; but the probability is that they would have raised an unpleasant antagonism in the question of competition in that country. The Chinaman would be equal to the Master, or White Man, if both worked fairly by the sweat of his brow. As for their usury, it is not of so dangerous a character as that which prevails among the Javanese and the natives.

Upon my first arrival I was strongly possessed by the opinion that the Chinamen were all rascals and thieves—the character so generally attached to the whole race at home. But to be candid, and looking at both sides, I would as soon deal with a Chinese merchant in the East as with one who is European, and I believe the respectable class of Chinese to be equal in honesty and integrity to the white man.

The Chinese may be nearly as troublesome a people to govern as Europeans, certainly not more so; and their good qualities, in which they are not deficient, should be cherished and stimulated, while their bad ones are regulated by the discipline of the law under a just and liberal government. They are a people

[1] This was written in 1866.

specially amenable to justice, and are happier under a stringent than a lenient system.

Of the Chinese the *Sarawak Gazette* (November 1, 1897) says :—

The characteristics of this extraordinary people must at once strike the minds of the most superficial of European residents in the East. Their wonderful energy and capacity for work; their power of accumulating wealth; their peculiar physical powers, which render them equally fertile, and their children equally vivacious, on the equator as in more temperate regions, and which enable them to rear a new race of natives under climatic conditions entirely different from those under which their forefathers were born, are facts with which we are all acquainted. Their mental endowments, too, are by no means to be despised, as nearly every year shows us, when the results of the examination for the Queen's Scholarship of the Straits Settlements are published, and some young Chinese boy departs for England to enter into educational competition with his European fellows.

Chinese get on well with all natives, with whom they intermarry, the mixed offspring being a healthy and good-looking type. They form the merchant, trading, and artisan classes, and they are the only agriculturists and mine labourers of any worth. Without these people a tropical country would remain undeveloped.

The only census that appears to have been attempted in Sarawak was taken in 1871. Judging by the report that was published in the *Gazette* this census was made in a very imperfect manner.[1] Of the interior population it includes Sea-Dayaks, but no means were obtainable for ascertaining the numbers of Kayans, Kenyahs, and many other tribes that go to make up the population of the State. It makes no separate mention of the large coast population of the Melanaus, who were presumably lumped with the Malays.

The census gives the following figures :—

[1] Amongst Eastern people any attempts to make a systematic census is liable to be misapprehended, and to give rise to a bad feeling, and even to dangerous scares, and for that reason no census has been made by the Government. This census was an approximation based upon the amount paid in direct taxation, such as head and door taxes, allowing an average of so many people to a family.

Malays	52,519
Dayaks	70,849
Chinese	4,947
Indians	364
	128,679
Allowed for evasions and omissions 10 per cent	12,867
Total	141,546

The report concedes it was the generally received opinion that the population was nearer 200,000, and if we include the Kayans, Kenyahs, etc., and accept the approximate correctness of the above figures, that estimate would be about correct.

In 1871, the State extended as far as Kedurong Point only, but since that the territorial area has been nearly doubled. The population is now estimated at 500,000, though this is probably too liberal a calculation, and the following is a fairer estimate:—

Coast population, Malays and Melanaus	100,000
Interior population, Land and Sea-Dayaks, Kayans and Kenyahs	250,000
Interior population other than these	18,000
Chinese population	45,000
Indians, Javanese, Bugis, etc.	3,000
	416,000

The names by which the various tribes are known are those given to them by others, mostly by the coast people, or are taken from the name of the river on which they reside, or from which they came. *Daya* (as it should be spelt, and as it is pronounced) in the Melanau and Bruni Malay dialect means "land," "in-land." So we have *Orang daya*, an in-lander. *Ka-daya-an* is contracted into *Kayan*; *Ukit* and *Bukitan* are from the Malay word *bukit*—a hill; and *tanjong* is the Malay for a cape or a point round which a river sweeps. Hence *Orang Ukit* or *Bukitan*, a hill-man,[1] and *Orang Tanjong*, riverside people.

[1] And so *Orang-Murut* means a hill-man, *murut*, or more correctly *murud*, meaning a hill—*bulud* in *Sulu*.

As in ancient Germany the districts were known by the names of the rivers that watered them, and each was a *gau*, so it is in Borneo, where the rivers are the roads of communication, and give their names to the districts and to the people that inhabit them. Indeed, in Borneo one can see precisely at this day what was the ancient *Gau-verfassung* in the German Empire.

The area of Sarawak is about 50,000 square miles, and the coast line about 500 miles.

The climate is hot and humid; it is especially moist during the N.E. monsoon, and less so during the S.W. monsoon. The former commences and the latter ends sometimes early and sometimes late in October, and in April the seasons again change. The months of most rain are December, January, and February; from February the rainfall decreases until July, the month of least rain, and increases gradually after that month. The average yearly rainfall is 160 inches. The maximum in any one year, 225.95 inches, was recorded in 1882, and the minimum 102.4 in 1888. The heaviest rainfall for one month, 69.25 inches, occurred in January, 1881, and the least, .66 inches, in August, 1877. The most in one day was 15.3 inches on February 8, 1876. Rain falls on an average 226 days in the year. These notes are taken from observations made in Kuching extending over thirty years.[1] At Sibu, the average rainfall for five years was 116 inches, at Baram 92 inches, and at Trusan 167 inches. Except in the sun at mid-day and during the early hours of the afternoon the heat is hardly ever oppressive, and the mornings, evenings and nights are generally cool. In 1906, the maximum average temperature was 91°.6, and the minimum 71°.2 Fahrenheit; the highest reading was 94° in May, and the lowest 69°.6 in July.[2]

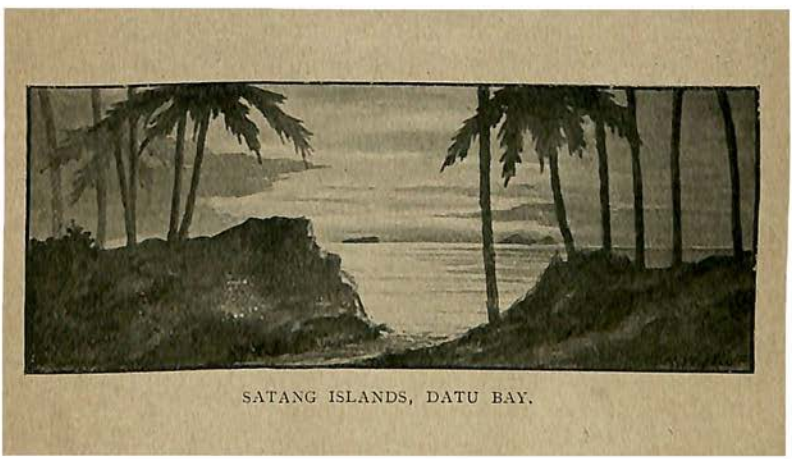
In few countries are thunderstorms more severe than in Borneo, but deaths from lightning are not very common, and hail falls so rarely that when it does fall it is an awe-inspiring object to some natives. Archdeacon Perham records that

[1] Mr. J. Hewitt, B.A., Curator of the Sarawak Museum in the *Sarawak Gazette*, February 2, 1906.

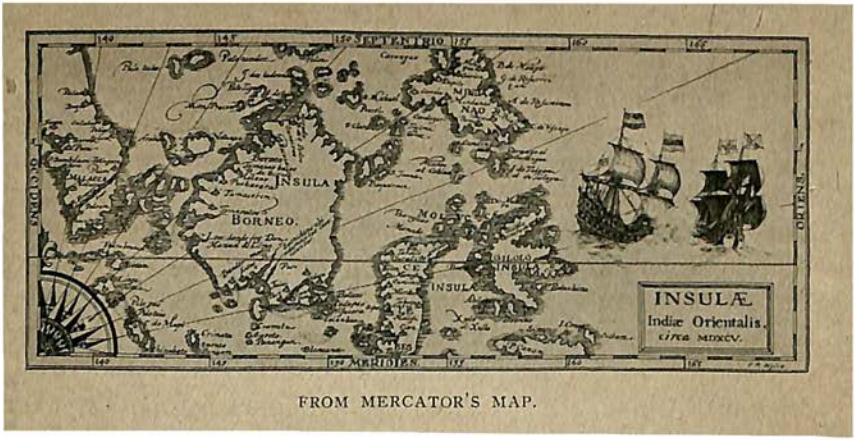
[2] Kuching Observatory.

during a very severe hailstorm in 1874 some Dayaks collected the hailstones under the impression that they were rare charms, whilst others fled from their house, believing that everybody and everything in it would be turned into a petrified rock, a woeful monument to future generations. To avert this catastrophe they boiled the hailstones and burnt locks of their hair.[1]

[1] The *Sarawak Gazette*.



SATANG ISLANDS, DATU BAY.



FROM MERCATOR'S MAP.

CHAPTER II

EARLY HISTORY

BORNEO was known to the Arabs many centuries ago, and Sinbad the Sailor was fabled to have visited the island. It was then imagined that a ship might be freighted there with pearls, gold, camphor, gums, perfumed oils, spices, and gems, and this was not far from the truth.

OLD JAR, "BENAGA."

When Genghis Khan conquered China, and founded his mighty Mogul Empire (1206-27), it is possible that he extended his rule over Borneo, where Chinese had already settled. Kublai Khan is said to have invaded Borneo with a large force in 1292;

and that a Chinese province was subsequently established in northern Borneo, in which the Sulu islands were included, is evidenced by Bruni and Sulu traditions. The Celestials have left their traces in the name of Kina Balu (the Chinese Widow) given to the noble peak in the north of the island,[1] and of the rivers Kina-batangan (the Chinese river) and Kina-bangun on the east coast of Borneo, and certain jars, mentioned in chapter I. p. 26, ornamented with the royal dragon of China, are treasured as heirlooms by the Dayaks. At Santubong, at the mouth of the Sarawak river, Chinese coins dating back to B.C. 600 and 112, and from A.D. 588 and onwards, have been found, with many fragments of Chinese pottery. The name Santubong is itself Chinese, San-tu-bong, meaning the "King of the Jungle" in the Kheh dialect, and the "Mountain of wild pig" in the Hokien dialect.

Besides the antique jars, the art of making which appears to have been lost, further evidence of an ancient Chinese trade may be found in the old and peculiar beads so treasured by the Kayans and Kenyahs. These are generally supposed to be Venetian, and to have been introduced by the Portuguese. Beccari (*op. cit.* p. 263) mentions that he had heard or read that the Malay word for a bead, *manit* (pronounced *maneet*), was a corruption of the Italian word *moneta* (money), which was used for glass beads at the time when the Venetians were the foremost traders in the world. But he points out "that the Venetians made their beads in imitation of the Chinese, who it appears had used them from the remotest times in their commercial transactions with the less civilized tribes of Southern Asia and the Malay islands." And it was by the Chinese these beads were probably introduced into Borneo; *manit* is but the Sanskrit word *mani*, meaning a bead.[2]

[1] Named by the Spaniards Mount St. Paul according to Pigafetta. J. Hunt gives St. Peter's Mount in his *Sketch of Borneo*, 1812, and a map by Mercator published in about 1595 gives St. Pedro, and old maps of subsequent dates also give the latter name.

[2] But Mr. C. Vernon-Collins, of the Sarawak Civil Service, recently found a bead which has been pronounced at the British Museum to have been made in Venice prior to A.D. 1100. A similar one of the same date was presented by H.H. the Ranee to the British Museum some years ago. It is a bead highly esteemed by the Kayans.

From the Kina-batangan river came the Chinese wife of Akhmed, the second Sultan of Bruni. She was the daughter of Ong Sum Ping, a Chinese envoy, and from her and Sultan Akhmed the Bruni sultans down to the present day, and for over twenty generations, trace their descent on the distaff side, for their daughter married the Arab Sherip Ali, who became Sultan in succession to his father-in-law, and they were the founders of the present dynasty.[1] Sulu chronicles contain the same legend; and according to these Ong Sum Ping, or Ong Ti Ping, settled in the Kina-batangan A.D. 1375. He was probably a governor in succession to others.

The Hindu-Javan empire of Majapahit in Java certainly extended over Borneo, but it left there no such stately temples and palaces as those that remain in Java, and the only reminiscences of the Hindu presence in Sarawak are the name of a god, Jewata,[2] which lingers among the Dayaks, a mutilated stone bull, two carved stones like the lingams of the Hindus; and at Santubong, on a large immovable rock situated up a small stream, is a rudely carved statue of a human figure nearly life-size, with outstretched arms, lying flat, face downwards, in an uncouth position, perhaps commemorative of some crime.[3]

Santubong is at the eastern mouth of the Sarawak river, and is prettily situated just inside the entrance, and at the foot of the isolated peak bearing the same name, which rises boldly out of the sea to a height of some 3000 feet. This place, which apparently was once a Chinese, and then a Hindu-Javan colony, is now a small fishing hamlet only, with a few European bungalows, being the sea-side resort of Kuching; close by are large cutch works. In ancient days, judging by the large quantity of slag that is to be seen here, iron must have been extensively mined.

[1] "Book of the Descent," Sir Hugh Low.—*Journal of the Straits Branch of the R.A.S.*, No. 5.

[2] Jewata is the Land-Dayak name of a god from the Sanskrit word *dewata* divinity, deity, gods. The Sea-Dyaks also have Jewata in their mythology, likewise Batara, from the Sanskrit *bhatar*, holy; neither means God, as some writers appear to think. The Dayaks have no idea of theism.

[3] The late Rajah has recorded a tradition of several of the Land-Dyak tribes that in the old times they were under the government of Java, and their tribute was regularly sent there.

Recently some ancient and massive gold ornaments, seal rings, necklets, etc., were exposed by a landslip at the Limbang station, which have been pronounced to be of Hindu origin; and ancient Hindu gold ornaments have been found at Santubong and up the Sarawak river.

Bruni had been a powerful kingdom, and had conquered Luzon and the Sulu islands before it became a dependency of Majapahit, but at the time of the death of the last Batara[1]

FIGURE ON ROCK—SANTUBONG.

of that kingdom, Bruni ceased to send tribute. The empire of Majapahit fell in 1478[2] before the Mussulman Malays. The origin of the Malays is shrouded in obscurity; they are first heard of in Sumatra, in Menangkabau,[3] from whence they emigrated in A.D. 1160 to Singapura, "the Lion city." They were attacked and expelled in 1252 by the princes of Majapahit, when they settled in Malacca. There they throve, and embraced the religion of Islam in 1276.

[1] The title assumed by the rulers of Majapahit, from "Bhatara," noted above.

[2] According to Crawfurd. Sir Stamford Raffles gives 1475.

[3] Formerly a monarchy whose jurisdiction comprehended all Sumatra, and whose sovereign was talked of with respect in the farthest parts of the East.—Marsden's *History of Sumatra*.

From Sumatra and the Malay peninsula the Malays continued to spread, and gradually to establish sultanates and states under them. The process by which this was effected was seldom by conquest, but by the peaceful immigration of a few families who settled on some unoccupied part of the coast within the mouth of a river. Then, in the course of time, they increased and spread to neighbouring rivers, and formed a state. By subjecting the aboriginal tribes of the interior, and by compulsion or consent, including weaker Malayan states of like origin, by degrees some of these states expanded into powerful sultanates with feudal princes under them.

So the Malayan kingdoms arose and gained power; and strengthened by the spirit of cohesion which their religion gave them, they finally overthrew the Hindu-Javan empire of Majapahit.

In Borneo there were sultans at Bruni, Sambas, Banjermasin, Koti, Belungan, Pasir, Tanjong, Berau, and Pontianak, and other small states under pangirans and sherips.

Exaggerated accounts of the "sweet riches of Borneo" had led the early Portuguese, Dutch, and English voyagers to regard the island, the Insula Bonæ Fortunæ of Ptolemy, as the *El dorado* of the Eastern Archipelago; but these in turn found out their error, and, directing their attention to the more profitable islands in its neighbourhood, almost forsook Borneo until later years.

The Spaniards appear to have been the first Europeans to visit the island, as they were the first to make the voyage round the world, and to find the way to the Archipelago from the east, a feat which caused the Portuguese much uneasiness. They touched at Bruni in 1521, and Pigafetta says that there were then 25,000 families in the city, which on a low computation would give the population at 100,000; and he gives a glowing account of its prosperity. The Portuguese, under the infamous Jorge de Menezes, followed in 1526, and they were there again in 1530. They confirm Pigafetta as to the flourishing condition of the place. From 1530 the Portuguese kept up a regular intercourse with Bruni from

Malacca, which the great Alfonso d'Albuquerque had conquered in 1511, until they were expelled from that place by the Dutch in 1641. Then they diverted the trade, which was chiefly in pepper, to their settlement at Macao, where they had placed a Factory in 1557, and from whence a Roman Catholic mission was established at Bruni by Fr. Antonio di Ventimiglia, who died there in 1691. It seems certain they had a Factory at Bruni, probably for a short time only, in the seventeenth century, though it is impossible now to do more than conjecture the date; but that they continued their trade with Bruni up to the close of the eighteenth century appears to be without doubt; and also that they had a Factory at Sambas out of which they were driven by the Dutch in 1609. On Mercator's map, alluded to in the first footnote of this chapter, are the words "Lave donde foy Don Manuel de Lima," or Lave where Don Manuel of Lima[1] resided. Lave is Mempawa, sometimes spelt Mempava in recent English maps, a place between Sambas and Pontianak — so the Portuguese were even farther south than Sambas in the sixteenth century.

In 1565, the Spanish took possession of the Philippines, conquered Manila in 1571, and, five years later, according to both Spanish and Bruni records, were taking an active interest in Bruni affairs, which, however, does not appear to have lasted for long. In 1576, Saif ul Rejal was Sultan. In the Bruni records[2] it is stated that a noble named Buong Manis, whose title was Pangiran Sri Lela (Sirela in the Spanish records), was goaded into rebellion by the Sultan's brother, Rajah Sakam, by the abduction of his daughter on the day of her wedding. To gain a footing in Bruni the Spaniards took advantage of this, and Don Francisco La Sande, the second Governor of the Philippines, conquered Bruni, and set Sri Lela on the throne. Four years later the Spaniards again had occasion to support their *protégé* with an armed force; but it ended in the rightful Sultan being restored through the efforts of the Rajah Sakam, aided by a

[1] Lima is a small town on the north coast of Portugal.
[2] Sir Hugh Low, *Book of the Descent*, *op. cit.*

Portuguese, who had become a Bruni pangiran,[1] and the usurper taking refuge in the Belait, where he was slain. To close the history, so far as it is known to us, of the Spanish connection with Bruni, in 1645, in retaliation for piracies committed on the coasts of their colonies, the Spanish sent an expeditionary force to punish Bruni, which it appears was very effectually done.

The first Dutchman to visit Bruni was Olivier Van Noort, in 1600. He seems to have been impressed by the politeness and civility of the Bruni nobles, but, fortunately for himself, not to the extent of trusting them too much, for treachery was attempted. Nine years later, as we have noticed, the Portuguese had to make room for the Dutch at Sambas, and here the latter established a Factory, which was, however, abandoned in 1623. They returned to this part of Borneo in 1778, and established Factories at Pontianak, Landak, Mempawa, and Sukadana, but these proving unprofitable were abandoned in 1791. In 1818, an armed force was sent to re-establish these Factories, two years after Java had been restored to Holland by England, and from these, including Sambas, the Dutch Residency of Western Borneo has arisen.

A certain Captain Cowley appears to have been the first Englishman, of whom we know anything, to visit Borneo, or at least that part of it with which this history deals, and in 1665 he spent some little time at "a small island which lay near the north end of Borneo,"[2] but he did not visit the mainland; perhaps, however, he may not have been the first. As far back as 1612, Sir Henry Middleton projected a voyage to Borneo. He died at Bantam in Java, where the East India Company had established a Factory in 1603, but it was not until 1682 that the Dutch expelled the English from that place, and from thence to Borneo is too simple an adventure not to have been attempted and accomplished by the daring old sea-dogs of those days. According to Dampier, a Captain Bowry was in Borneo in 1686;[3] some English were captured by the Dutch when they took Suka-

[1] See note 2, p. 45.
[2] *A Collection of Voyages*, 1729, Dampier.
[3] *Idem.*

dana in 1687; and there were probably others there before, but no settlement on the north and north-western shores was effected by the English until 1773, when the East India Company formed a settlement at Balambangan, an island north of Marudu Bay, the same probably as that on which Captain Cowley had stayed. This settlement, however, was but short lived, for in February 1775 it was attacked by a small force of Sulus and Lanuns led by a cousin of the Sultan of Sulu, Datu Teting. The garrison of English and Bugis was more than sufficient to have repelled the attack, but they were taken completely by surprise; the Resident and the few settlers managed to escape in what vessels they could find.[1] A number of cannon and muskets, and considerable booty, fell into the hands of the raiders. The motive for this act was revenge; the English had behaved badly to the natives of the neighbouring islands, and Datu Teting had himself suffered the indignity of being placed in the stocks when on a visit to the settlement. The Company had established a Factory at Bruni as well, having obtained from the Sultan the monopoly of the pepper trade, and to this Factory the survivors retired, but some settled on the island of Labuan, where they made a village. In 1803, the Company again established themselves at Balambangan, but after a short occupation abandoned the island, together with the Factory at Bruni. No punishment followed Datu Teting's act, and British *prestige* in northern Borneo was destroyed.

This is briefly the whole history of British enterprise in that part of Borneo lying north of the equator, and it reflects little credit on the part played by our countrymen in Eastern affairs in those days.

We have shown that Bruni early in the fourteenth century possessed a population of at least 100,000. According to Sir Hugh Low, two hundred years after Pigafetta's visit, the population was estimated at 40,000, with a Chinese population in its neighbourhood of 30,000, engaged in planting pepper.[2] In 1809, the city had shrunk to 3000 houses

[1] Forrest's *Voyage to New Guinea*, 1779.
[2] *Sarawak*, Hugh Low, 1848.

with a population of 15,000.[1] In 1847, Low placed the population at 12,000; the Chinese had then disappeared, excepting a few who had been reduced to slavery. The population, still diminishing, is now under 8000.

On the picturesque hills that surround the town are still to be found traces of thriving plantations which formerly existed there, and which extended for many miles into the interior. These have totally disappeared, with the population which cultivated them. In 1291, two centuries before the first European vessel rounded the Cape,[2] Ser Marco Polo visited the Archipelago. He gives us the first narrative we possess of the Chinese junk trade to the westward, and mentions a great and profitable traffic carried on by the Chinese with Borneo,[3] and this trade throve for many years afterwards; even in 1776 the commerce with China was considerable,[4] though then it must have been declining, for it had ceased before the close of that century. Hunt records that in his time there were still to be seen at Bruni old docks capable of berthing vessels of from 500-600 tons. Now the most striking feature of the place is its profound poverty. Nothing remains of its past glory and prosperity but its ancient dynasty.

Sir Hugh Low tells us that these old Malay kingdoms appear to have risen to their zenith of power and prosperity two hundred years after their conversion to Islam, and then their decline commenced, but he should have added half a century to this epoch. The late Rajah was of opinion that perhaps the introduction of Muhammadanism may have been the cause of their deterioration. Two hundred and fifty years after the conversion of the Malays to Muhammadanism, and under the ægis of this religion, all the Malayan States attained their zenith. This period was coetaneous with the appearance of what may fairly be described as their *white peril*, and the introduction of Muhammadanism, a religion which Christians, in their ignorance of its true precepts, are too apt wholly to condemn, brought with it the pernicious sherips,

[1] Hunt, *op. cit.*

[2] Dias, in 1487.

[3] "Antiquity of Chinese Trade," J. R. Logan in the *Journal of the Indian Archipelago*, 1848.

[4] Forrest, *op. cit.*

the pests of the Archipelago. The decay of the old Malayan kingdoms was due primarily to the rapacious and oppressive policy adopted by Europeans in their early dealings with these States, which was continued in a more modified form until within recent times. How this was brought about, and how the sherips contributed to it, is in the sequel.

Prior to the advent of the late Rajah in 1838, Sarawak appears to have attracted no attention, except that Gonsavo Pereira, who made the second Portuguese visit to Bruni in 1530, says that Lave (Mempawa), Tanjapura (which cannot be identified), and Cerava (Sarawak) were the principal ports, and contained many wealthy merchants; and Valentyn relates that in 1609 the Dutch found that Calca (Kalaka), Saribas, and Melanugo had fallen away from Borneo (Bruni) and placed themselves under the power of the king of Johore.[1] Melanugo is also difficult to identify, but it may be that a transcriptive error has crept in somewhere, and that it refers to the Malanau districts beyond Kalaka.[2]

The Sarawak Malays claim their origin from the ancient Kingdom of Menangkabau in Sumatra. Fifteen generations back, one Datu Undi, whose title was Rajah Jarom, a prince of the royal house of Menangkabau, emigrated with his people to Borneo, and settled on the Sarawak river. This prince had seven children, the eldest being a daughter, the Datu Permisuri.[3] She married a royal prince of Java (this was after the downfall of Majapahit), and from them in a direct line came the Datu Patinggi Ali, of whom more will be

[1] Logan, *op. cit.*

[2] Mercator's map gives Melano, which confirms this supposition. Other places on the Sarawak coast mentioned in this map are Tamaio-baio, Barulo (Bintulu), Puchavarao (Muka), Tamenacrim, and Tamaratos. The first and two last cannot be identified. Tama is of course for *tanah*, land, and the last name simply means in Malay, the land of hundreds—of many people, which the first name may also imply. *Varao* being man in Spanish and Portuguese, Puchavarao means the place of the Pucha (Muka) people—Pucha also being a transcriber's error for Puka. It was near this place that the Portuguese captain, who afterwards became a Bruni pangiran (p. 42) was wrecked, and also near this place on Cape Sirik, a point which is continually advancing seaward, that some forty to fifty years ago the remains of a wreck were discovered a considerable distance from the sea, and so must have belonged to a ship wrecked many years before. When Rentap's stronghold in the Saribas was captured by the present Rajah in 1861, an old iron cannon dated 1515 was found there. Traditions exist pointing to wrecks and to the existence of hidden treasure at two or three places along the coast.

[3] Meaning queen-consort.

noticed in the sequel, and the lineage is now represented by his grandson, the present Datu Bandar of Sarawak.

The Datu Permisuri remained in Sarawak. Rajah Jarom's eldest son established himself in the Saribas; his third son in the Samarahan; the fourth in the Rejang;[1] and the fifth up the right-hand branch of the Sarawak, from whence his people spread into the Sadong. These settlements increased within their original limits, but were not extended beyond the Rejang.

Beyond this the Malays of Sarawak know little; but that these settlements must have early succumbed to the rising power of Bruni is evident. But it is also evident that after that power had commenced to wane, its hold over Sarawak gradually weakened until it became merely nominal. In 1609, the year they established themselves at Sambas, the Dutch found that these districts had fallen away from Bruni, as we have noticed. There may have been, and probably were, spasmodic assertions of authority on the part of Bruni, but it seems fairly evident that the Sarawak Malays managed to maintain an independence more or less complete for many years, up to within a very short period of the late Rajah's arrival, and then they had placed themselves again under the sovereignty of the Sultan, only to be almost immediately driven into rebellion by Pangiran Makota, the Sultan's first and last governor of Sarawak.

Just a century after the Portuguese had shown the way, and had won for their king the haughty title of "Lord of the Navigation and Commerce of Ethiopia, Arabia, Persia, and India," the English and the Dutch appeared in the Archipelago. The latter under Houtman, who had learnt the way from the Portuguese under whom he had served, were the first, in 1595, if we exclude Drake, 1578, and Cavendish, ten years later, and both merely passed through the southern portion of the Archipelago on their way home on their voyages round the world.

During the seventeeth century the English confined their energies to buccaneering and trading, and established only two Factories, at Bantam 1603, and at Bencoolen 1685. The

[1] Probably the Kalaka; the Malays in the Rejang came from that river.

Dutch went in for conquest, established themselves strongly at Jakatra, renamed by them Batavia, in 1611, and then proceeded to drive the Portuguese out of their settlements. The power of Portugal had been humbled by Spain, and the courageous spirit of the old conquistadores had departed. One by one her settlements were wrested from her, and by the end of the century Holland was paramount in the Archipelago. Beyond one or two abortive descents upon Luzon, one, probably the last, under the famous Tasman, the Dutch had left the Spaniards undisturbed in the Philippines, but to the English was left Bencoolen only, Bantam having been taken away from them in 1682, and to the Portuguese a portion of the island of Timor.

During the latter half of the eighteenth century commenced the rise of Great Britain as a political power in the Malayan Peninsula and Archipelago. In 1760, her only settlements, those on the western coast of Sumatra, had been destroyed by the French, but these were re-established in 1763, and Becoolen was fortified. In 1786, the colony at Penang (Prince Edward's island) was established ; and nine years later Malacca was captured from the Dutch.

Early in the nineteenth century came the temporary downfall of Holland. In 1811, Java was taken by the British, and the Dutch settlements and dependencies passed into their hands, though these were soon to be restored. After subjugating the independent princes of the interior and introducing order throughout Java, which the Dutch had so far failed to accomplish, all her possessions in the Archipelago were restored to Holland in 1816 ; and in 1825 Bencoolen was exchanged for Malacca. Singapore was founded in 1819.

In Borneo south of the equator, excepting Sukadana, which has already been mentioned, Banjermasin had been the only country to attract attention, and in this formerly rich pepper country the Dutch and English were alternately established. As early as 1606, the former, with disastrous results, attempted to establish a Factory there, and after that experience they appear to have left the place severely alone, and the Banjers were free of the *white peril* for another century. Then, in 1702, the East India Company established

a Factory there. As this venture is an interesting illustration of the methods adopted by the English, and an example of their common misconduct and mismanagement, we give a few particulars. The old Dutch chronicler, Valentyn, tells us how the Factor, Captain Moor, who lived in a house constructed on a raft, with only a wretched earth rampart ashore, and a handful of English and Bugis (of the Celebes) soldiers, laid a heavy hand on the people, but managed to hold his own, until in 1706 a Captain Barry commenced building a proper fort, but he died before it was completed. Then a surgeon, who was more interested in natural history than anything else, became Factor. The aggression of the English increased, and the Sultan drove them out with the loss of many men and two ships. Captain Beeckman, of the H.E.I. Company's service, who was there in 1713, ascertained that Captain Barry had been poisoned, and he tells us so hateful had their servants rendered the name of the Company to the Banjereens that he had to pretend his ships were private traders. They had promised the Sultan to build no forts nor make soldiers. They grossly ill-treated, and even murdered the natives, imposed duties, and finally insulted the Sultan, and attempted to capture the queen-mother. The English, taken by the natives, including a Captain Cockburn, were put to a cruel death.[1]

Then came the Dutch once more, in 1747. They left in 1810, and the Sultan then petitioned the English to settle there again. This was done, but, simultaneously with their evacuation of Java, the English retired from Banjermasin, and it was transferred to the Dutch, who shortly afterwards re-established their old stations in western Borneo up to Sambas.

The Dutch continued to extend their influence, till, in process of time, they had acquired control over two-thirds of the island.

Necessarily this is but a brief summary of the political history of Borneo, and of the countries adjacent to it up to the time when commences our story of the north-western portion of the island, but it may be deemed sufficient to afford the reader a clearer insight into the narrative that follows

[1] *A Voyage to and from the Island of Borneo*, 1718.

The system of trade adopted by the Dutch, following in the footsteps of the Portuguese, was bad. Each in turn made of trade a monopoly, excluding the vessels of every other nation. Such produce of the country as was suitable for the Chinese market had to be sent first to one of their own depôts, thence to be transhipped to China, and all direct intercourse with China was checked. This cessation of direct trade affected the prosperity of the ports, among others Bruni, in a variety of ways. First, by the circuitous direction of the trade the exports became too expensive to fetch the cost of the double carriage, and in course of time dwindled to nothing. In the next place, the cessation of immediate intercourse with China arrested the flow of immigrants, hard-working and frugal men, who would have exploited the industries and natural products of the island. A third, and that the most serious effect of all, as a result of the extinction of honest trade and internal development, was the encouragement given to piracy. The sultans and rajahs were unable to maintain their state, and the people to satisfy their requirements by just means, and so commenced to live by piracy. So long as immediate requirements were satisfied by this means, they gave no thought to the morrow; it did not occur to them, or they were too ignorant to consider, that they were pulling up by the roots that on which the future prosperity of their countries depended.

"The Dutch had no sooner established themselves at Batavia than, not satisfied with transferring to it the emporium of Bantam, they conceived the idea of making it the sole and only depôt of the commerce of the Archipelago. . . . The destruction of the native trade of the Archipelago by this withering policy may be considered as the origin of many of the evils and of all the piracies of which we now complain. A maritime and commercial people, suddenly deprived of all honest employment, or the means of respectable subsistence, either sunk into apathy and indolence, or expended their natural energies in piratical attempts to recover by force and plunder what they had been deprived of by policy and fraud." So wrote Sir Stamford Raffles in 1821.

That bold, old west-country buccaneer, and erstwhile

captain of the King's Navy, William Dampier, who besides being a shrewd fighter and trader, appears to have been equally as shrewd an observer, draws a sad picture of the degradation of flourishing states under the grinding power of the Dutch. He relates that the natives had ever been willing to trade with all nations, but the Dutch East India Company not only monopolised all the trade of those countries under their immediate control, but by means of their guard-ships prevented the adjacent countries trading with others than themselves, even with those of their own countrymen who were not connected with the Company, though they were not in a position to supply these countries with all the commodities their inhabitants needed, or to purchase or load all their produce.[1] The cultivation of pepper naturally declined,[2] and in some places the natives were prevented planting more than the Company would require. So it was with spices. In October every year the Dutch would send a large force throughout the spice islands to destroy trees, so as to keep the production down, and small garrisons were scattered about, whose sole duty appears to have been to see that the cultivation of spices was restricted to the requirements of the Dutch alone.[3]

"The people, though they are Malayans, yet they are civil enough, engaged thereto by trade; for the more trade the more civility; and, on the contrary, the less trade the more barbarity and inhumanity. For trade has a strong influence upon all people, who have found the sweet of it, bringing with it so many conveniences of life as it does. I find the Malayans in general are implacable enemies to the Dutch; and all seems to spring from an earnest desire they have of a free trade, which is restrained by them where they have any power. But 'tis freedom only must be the means to encourage any of these remote people to trade,—especially such of them as are industrious, and whose inclinations are bent this way, as most of the Malayans are.

[1] The Dutch confiscated all foreign ships they could seize found trading in the Archipelago without permission from them to do so.

[2] Borneo and Sumatra were then the great pepper producing countries.

[3] Forrest, *op. cit.*, confirms this, and adds "the Dutch forbid the natives to manufacture cloth."

"Where there is any trade to be had, yet not sufficient to maintain a Factory, or where there may not be a convenient place to build a fort, so as to secure the whole trade to themselves, they (the Dutch) send their guard-ships, which, lying at the mouth of the rivers, deter strangers from coming thither, and keep the petty princes in awe of them. This probably causes so many petty robberies and piracies as are committed by the Malayans.

"Being thus provoked by the Dutch, and hindered of a free trade by their guard-ships, it is probable they therefore commit piracies themselves, or connive at and encourage those who do. So that the pirates seem to do it as much to revenge themselves on the Dutch for restraining their trade, as to gain this way what they cannot obtain in way of traffic."

So wrote Dampier, and if we go on to seventy years ago, when Sir James Brooke commenced, unaided, that countermove which resulted in the salvation of the northern part of Borneo from the then hurtful and narrow-minded rule of the Dutch, and to its being opened to British trade and influence, we learn from his own words "how the policy of the Dutch has at the present day reduced this 'Eden of the Eastern Wave' to a state of anarchy and confusion, as repugnant to humanity as it is to commercial prosperity. . . It is the direct influence which it exerts that has proved baneful to the Archipelago under the assumed jurisdiction of this European power. Her unceasing interference in the concerns of the Malay governments and the watchful fomenting of their internal dissensions have gradually and effectually destroyed all rightful authority, and given rise to a number of petty states which thrive on piracy and fatten on the slave trade. The consequent disorganisation of society arising from these causes has placed a bar to commercial enterprise and personal adventure, and has probably acted on the interior tribes much in the same way as this fatal policy has affected the Malays. As far as can be ascertained, the financial and commercial concerns of the Dutch have not been prosperous; it is easy to conceive such to be the case, as it will be conceded that oppression and prosperity cannot

co-exist. In short, with the smallest amount of advantage, the Dutch Government has all along endeavoured to perpetuate an exclusive system, aiming more at injury to others than any advantage to themselves or to the nations under their sway; for where an enlightened administration might have produced the most beneficial results, we are forced to deplore not only the mischief done and the mass of good neglected, but the misery and suffering inflicted on unhappy races, capable, as has been proved, of favourable development under other circumstances."

In Borneo, as elsewhere, the Malays had for long been notorious pirates, but the Sea-Dayaks, only so far as consisted in spasmodic raids for the acquisition of heads.

The Malay governors, now under the influence of the Arab pseudo-sherips, diverted whole tribes of Dayaks from their peaceable avocations, and converted them into sea-robbers. The cultivation of their lands to produce saleable goods, for which there was now no sale, was abandoned, and fertile districts that had grown abundant crops were reduced to unprofitable jungle.

But it was not only on trading vessels in the China seas that they were taught to prey. The Malay princes and nobles sent those tribes whom they had demoralised to ascend the rivers and plunder and exterminate the peaceful tribes in the interior.

Among the tribes thus changed from an agricultural people into pirates were the Sekrang and the Saribas. When the Malay Muhammadan princes wanted slaves they summoned their Dayak nominal subjects to follow them, and led them against other tribes, either to harry the coasts or to penetrate up the rivers ravaging; and then, from this first stage to a second, converted them into pirates who swept the seas, falling on trading vessels, murdering the crews, and appropriating the plunder. According to agreement the Malay princes received two-thirds of the spoil, and their Dayak subjects, whom they had trained to be pirates, were granted one-third of the plunder and all the heads they could take.

About this head-hunting something has been said already, more will be said presently. As a Dayak said to a European, "You like books, we like heads."

In the latter half of the seventeenth century, the Sultan of Bruni, Muadin, was constrained to call in the aid of his neighbour, the Sultan of Sulu, to quell an insurrection, and in consideration of this assistance ceded to him the land from the north as far as the Kimanis river.

Sultan Abdul Mubin had murdered his uncle, Sultan Muhammad Ali, and usurped the throne. Pangiran Bongsu, under the title of Sultan Muadin, with the assistance of the Sulus, defeated Abdul Mubin, who was executed. Muhammad Ali was murdered in 1662, and a war ensued that lasted about twelve years.[1]

The Spaniards attacked Sulu, captured the capital, and carried off the Sultan to Manila. When the English took Manila, under Sir William Draper in 1762, they released the Sultan Mumin, and he ceded the territory that had been granted to his predecessors by the Sultan of Bruni in or about 1674 to the East India Company, by deed signed in 1763, in consideration of an engagement entered into by the Company to protect him from the Spaniards.

Sultan Jemal ul Alam, of Bruni, who died in 1796, married Rajah Nur Alam, daughter of his uncle Sultan Khan Zul Alam, 21st Sultan of Bruni, by his first wife. By her he had one legitimate son, Omar Ali Saif Udin. The wife of Sultan Jemal had a full brother, Sri Banun Muda (usually called Rajah Api), and also half-brothers Hasim and Muhammad, sons of Khan Zul Alam by his second wife, and Bedrudin and two other sons by his third wife, a Lanun lady of rank.

On the death of his grand-uncle, also grandfather, and predecessor, Khan Zul Alam, Omar Ali was but a child, and Rajah Api claimed the throne, under the title of Sultan Muhammad Alam, and there were years of trouble in Bruni. Sir Hugh Low describes him as a madman with the most cruel propensities, whence probably his nickname Api, which signifies "Fire." He treated his nephew with great

[1] Sir Hugh Low, *op. cit.*

roughness, and often threatened him with a drawn sword, and Omar ran whimpering to his mother to complain. The prince's mother had long been jealous of the assumption of the sultanate by her brother, and, her son being almost imbecile, she hoped, by getting rid of Api, to exercise great power in the state. Accordingly, about the year 1828, she summoned those of her party and surrounded the residence of the Sultan Muhammad Alam, or Api, who finding himself deserted escaped in a boat. His sister sent after him a pangiran, or noble, with professions of friendship, and this pangiran persuaded him to assume the disguise of a woman to facilitate his escape. Then he got him into a little skiff, and led him into an ambush, where he was ordered to be put to death. He received the intimation with firmness. "Observe," said he, "when you strangle me, on which side my body shall fall—if to the right it prognosticates good for Bruni, if to the left it foretells evil." The bow-string was twisted, and Api sank on his left side. As we shall see that omen proved true.

Api's brother, Rajah Muda Hasim, an amiable, courteous, feeble man, was installed as Regent; and some time later was sent to Sarawak, where a rebellion had broken out, caused by the exactions and cruelty of the Pangiran Makota, who had been appointed governor of Sarawak by the Sultan. Hasim found the whole district a prey to anarchy, and those who should have reduced it to order were incompetent and too cowardly to fight. All he was able to do was to maintain a nominal sovereignty in the capital, Kuching.

The Malays and Arabs being Muhammadans, looked down on the pagan Land-Dayaks, subject to their domination, as mere bondsmen, to be slaughtered, fleeced, or enslaved—to be treated, in a word, as their caprice dictated, without being taken to task for their misdeeds. The limit of their exactions was fixed by necessity. The point beyond which oppression ceased was that where nothing was left to be extorted. But over the Sea-Dayaks of Sekrang, Saribas, and Kanowit they had no power. These tribes were far too independent in character and powerful to submit to oppression. These Sea-Dayaks would follow

their so-called masters on a piratical expedition, and would obey them only so far as it pleased themselves to do so. As to the Kayans, they were too greatly feared to be molested. The late Mr. H. B. Low[1] in 1879 was refused permission by the Sultan to cross into the Baram by the Limbang, for fear lest this should show the Kayans a way into Bruni. The Malay rulers oppressed their own people and the Melanaus almost as badly as they did the Land-Dayaks, murdering, robbing, and enslaving them.

The Land-Dayaks in Sarawak were governed by local Malay datus called Patinggi, Bandar, and Temanggong. These officers monopolised the trade. When the Dayaks had collected rice, edible birds' nests, wax, etc., the Patinggi claimed the right to buy the produce at a price fixed by himself, and one that barely allowed the seller enough to pay for his own necessaries. And not only did the Patinggi claim the right of pre-emption, but so did all his relatives, and in the end so did every Bornean Malay of any position. If the poor Dayak did not produce sufficient to satisfy the Patinggi, girls and children were taken to make up the deficit and sold into slavery.[2]

He would sometimes send a bar of iron to a headman of a tribe, whether the latter wanted it or not, and require him to purchase it at an exorbitant price fixed by the sender. The man dared not refuse; then another bar was sent, and again another, till the Dayak chief was reduced to poverty.

If a Malay met a Dayak in his boat, and the boat pleased him, he would cut a notch in the gunwale in token that he appropriated it to his own use. Possibly enough some other Bornean Malay might fancy the same boat and cut another notch. This might occur several times. Then the Dayak was required to hand over his boat to the first who had marked it, and to indemnify the other claimants to the value of the vessel.

[1] Son of the late Sir Hugh Low, G.C.M.G. He served in the Sarawak Civil Service from 1869 to 1887, in which year he died. His knowledge of the natives, their languages, and customs, was unsurpassed. The notes he left formed the basis of Ling Roth's work, *The Natives of Borneo*, 1896.

[2] This was the *serah*, or forced trade formerly in force in all Malayan countries; and it appears to be still so, in a modified form, in Sumatra.

Any injury done, or pretended to have been done, however accidentally, by a Dayak to a Malay, had to be paid for by a ruinous fine. There was no court of appeal, no possibility of redress. A Malay could always, and at any time, enter the house of a Dayak, and live there in free quarters as long as he pleased, insult or maltreat the wife and children of his unwilling host with impunity, and on leaving carry away with him any of the Dayak's property to which he had taken a fancy; and, when the novelty of the possession wore off, force his late host to buy it back again at an extravagant price. But this was not all. When antimony was found, the unfortunate Land-Dayaks were driven to mine it at no wage at all, and their hard taskmasters did not even trouble themselves to provide them with food.[1] The consequence was that many of them died, and others fled to the jungle. As one of them pathetically said, "We do not live like men; we are like monkeys; we are hunted from place to place. We have no houses, and when we light a fire we are in fear lest the smoke should betray to our enemies where we are."

Of Dayaks there are, as already stated, two sorts, the Land-Dayak and the Sea-Dayak, the first of Indonesian, the second of proto-Malay stock. The former are a quiet, timid, industrious people, honest, and by no means lacking in intelligence, living on hill-tops to which they have fled from their oppressors; the latter throve on piracy, having been brought to this by the Muhammadan Malays and the half-bred Arabs. But even among the Sea-Dayaks a few tribes had not been thus vitiated, and upon these the late Rajah could always rely for support.

Their Malay masters furnished the Sea-Dayaks, whom they had converted into predatory savages, with ammunition and guns, and sent them either to sea to attack merchant vessels, or up the rivers to fall upon villages of peaceful tribes; then the men were slaughtered, the women and children carried off into slavery. The villages were burnt, and by a refinement of cruelty the fruit trees cut down and standing crops

[1] The Sarawak Malays were also so forced to mine by Pangiran Makota, and this forced labour was one of the principal causes of the rebellion of 1836-40 against the Sultan's Government.

destroyed, from which the principal provision of the natives was gathered, so as to reduce to starvation those who had escaped into the jungle. Land-Dayak tribes that formerly had been numerous and prosperous were reduced to small numbers and to poverty. One that reckoned 230 families dwindled to 50. Three whole tribes were completely exterminated. One of 120 families was brought down to two, that is to say, of 960 persons only 16 were left. The population that had consisted of 1795 families, or, reckoning eight persons to each family, 14,360 souls, in ten years was reduced to 6792 souls showing a decrease in these ten years of 946 families, or of 7568 persons. On Sir James (then Mr.) Brooke's visit to the country in 1840, in converse with the chief of one of the native tribes, the man told him, "The Rajah takes from us whatever he wants, at whatever price he pleases, and the pangirans take whatever they can get for no price at all," "At first," says Mr. Brooke, "the Dayak paid a small stated sum as an acknowledgment of vassalage, by degrees this became an arbitrary and unlimited taxation, and now, to consummate the iniquity, the entire tribes are pronounced slaves and liable to be disposed of."

The natural result of such treatment was that those natives who escaped spoilation and slaughter fled up the country beyond reach of their persecutors. The depopulation from the same cause went on in the neighbourhood of Bruni as well as in Sarawak. Mr. Spenser St. John says in 1858: "It is melancholy to see this fine district (Limbang), once well cultivated, now returning to jungle; formerly where the population extended a hundred miles beyond the last village at present inhabited, the supply of provisions was ample at Bruni. Now that the natives are decreasing, while Bruni is perhaps as numerous as ever, the demands made by the nobles are too great even for the natives' forbearance, and in disgust they are gradually abandoning all garden cultivation. Already brushwood is taking the place of bananas and yams, so that few of either are to be had. The people say it is useless for them to plant for others to eat the whole produce. Then as the natives cannot furnish the supplies exacted of

them by the pangirans, these latter take from them their children; the lads are circumcised and made Mahomedans and slaves, and the girls are drafted into the already crowded harems of the rajahs." The same writer gives an instance or two of the manner in which the subject natives were treated. In 1855, the warlike Kayans of the interior descended the Limbang river and threatened a tribe of Muruts. The Pangiran Makota,[1] virtual governor of Bruni, met them and arranged with the chiefs that for the sum of £700 they should spare these Muruts. Then he set those who were menaced to collect the money. When they had done this and placed the sum in his hands, he pocketed it and returned to Bruni, leaving the Kayans to deal with the tribe after their own sweet will.

Again, in 1857, the same head-hunters threatened another Murut village. Makota had a secret interview with the Kayan chiefs, and then gave out that peace had been concluded. What he had actually done was to deliver over to them to pillage and exterminate the Murut village of Balal Ikan, against which he bore a grudge for having resisted his exactions.

The whole of the north and west of Borneo was in a condition of indescribable wretchedness and hopelessness when Mr. James Brooke appeared on the scene. Oppression the most cruel and grinding, encouragement of piracy and head-hunting by the selfish, unscrupulous pangirans sent from Bruni, were depopulating the fair land. Sarawak, then a very small province, was, as we shall see, in insurrection. Single-handed, with but a comparatively small capital, the whole of which he sank in the country, with no support from the British Government, with no Chartered Company at his back, he devoted his life to transform what had become a hell into what it has become, a peaceful and happy country.

[1] This happened after this man had been banished by the late Rajah from Sarawak. See Chap. III. p. 87, for the fate he met and so richly merited.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER II

LIST OF THE MUHAMMEDAN SULTANS OF BRUNI

Taken from the *Selesilah* (Book of the Descent), preserved in Bruni, by the late Sir Hugh Low, G.C.M.G. Published in the Journal No. 5 of the Straits Branch R.A.S.

1. Sultan Mahomed, who introduced the religion of Islam.
2. Sultan Akhmed, brother of above, married to the daughter of Ong Sum Ping, Chinese Raja of Kinabatangan. No sons, but one daughter married to—
3. Sultan Berkat, from Taif in Arabia. A descendant of the prophet through his grandson Husin. Berkat, the blessed. His real name was Sherif Ali.
4. Sultan Suleiman, son of above, who was succeeded by his son—
5. Sultan Bulkeiah;[1] towards the end of his reign Pigafetta's first visit to Bruni in 1521 probably took place.
6. Sultan Abdul Kahar, son of above. Had forty-two sons, of whom—
7. Saif-ul-Rejal succeeded him. During his reign the Spaniards attacked Bruni in 1576 and 1580, taking it on the second occasion.
8. Sultan Shah Bruni, son of above. Having no children he abdicated in favour of his brother—
9. Sultan Hasan, succeeded by his son.
10. Sultan Abdul-Jalil-ul-Akbar, succeeded by his son.
11. Sultan Abdul-Jalil-ul-Jehar, who was succeeded by his uncle—
12. Sultan Mahomet Ali, son of Sultan Hasan.
13. Sultan Abdul Mubin. Son of Sultan Mahomet Ali's sister. He murdered his uncle and usurped the throne. He was worsted in a revolution that lasted twelve years, and was executed.
14. Sultan Muaddim, fourth son of Sultan Jalil-ul-Akbar, nephew and son-in-law of Sultan Mahomet Ali. Succeeded by his nephew (half-brother's son)—
15. Sultan Nasr Addin, grandson of Sultan Jalil-ul-Akbar.
16. Sultan Kemal-Addin, son of Sultan Mahomet Ali, who abdicated in favour of his son-in-law—

[1] Famous in Malay legends throughout the East as Nakoda Ragam, a renowned sea rover and conqueror.

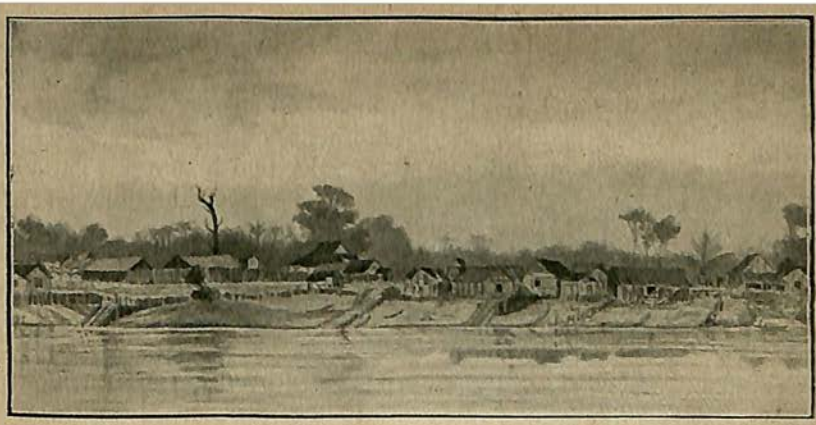
17. Sultan Mahomet Ali-Udin—on his father's side grandson of Sultan Muaddin, on his mother's side great-great-grandson of Sultan Jalil-ul-Akbar. He died before his father-in-law and great uncle, Sultan Kemal-Addin, who again ascended the throne and was succeeded by his son—
18. Sultan Omar Ali Saif-udin. Died 1795. Succeeded by his son—
19. Sultan Tej-Walden. Died 1807. He abdicated in favour of his son—
20. Sultan Jemal-ul-Alam, who reigned for a few months only, and died in 1796, when his father reascended the throne and was succeeded in 1809 by his half-brother—
21. Sultan Khan Zul-Alam, succeeded by his great-nephew and grandson—
22. Sultan Omar Ali Saif-Udin, second son of Sultan Mahomed Jemal-ul-Alam. Died 1852. He left the throne, by will and general consent of the people, to
23. Sultan Abdul Mumin, who was descended from Sultan Kemal-Addin. Died 1885, succeeded by
24. Sultan Hasim-Jalilal Alam Akamaddin, son of Sultan Omar Ali Saif-udin. Died 1906.
25. Sultan Mahomet Jemal-ul-Alam, son of above.

The above are abridged extracts. The last two sultans were not included in Low's list, which was made in 1893. Low's spelling of the names is followed.

Forrest, *op. cit.*, who obtained his information from Mindanau records, states that about 1475 a Sherip Ali and his two brothers came from Mecca. Ali became the first Muhammadan prince in Mindanau; one brother became King of Borneo (Bruni) and the other King of the Moluccas. As regards the date this agrees with the Bruni records, and the brothers might have borne the same name. (See Mahomet Ali, Omar Ali above.)

According to Chinese records, a Chinese is said to have been King of Bruni in the beginning of the 15th century.[1] This would have been in Ong Sum Ping's time, and it probably refers to him.

[1] W. P. Groeneveldt, *Essays relating to Indo-China*, 1887.



KUCHING IN 1840.
(The picture at the end of this chapter is taken from exactly the same point of view.)

CHAPTER III

THE MAKING OF SARAWAK

JAMES BROOKE was born at Benares on April 29, 1803, and was the son of Thomas Brooke of the East India Company's Civil Service. He entered the Company's army in 1819, and took part in the first Burmese war, in which he was severely wounded, and from which he was invalided home in 1825. He had been honourably mentioned in despatches for conspicuous services rendered in having raised a much needed body of horse, and for bravery. Then he resigned his commission, and visited China, Penang, Malacca, and Singapore. There he heard much of the beauty and the wonders of the fairy group of islands forming the Eastern Archipelago, and of the dangers to be encountered there from Malay pirates; islands rich in all that nature could lavish in flower and fruit, in bird and gorgeous butterfly, in diamond and

pearl, but "the trail of the serpent was over them all." Very little was known of these islands, few English vessels visited them, the trade was monopolised by the Dutch, who sought to exclude all European nations from obtaining a foothold. They claimed thousands of islands from Sumatra to Papua as within their exclusive sphere of influence, islands abounding in natural products which they exploited imperfectly, and did nothing to develop. This was a dog-in-the-manger policy to which Great Britain submitted.

The young man's ambition was fired; he longed to explore these seas, to study the natural history, the ethnology, to discover gaps in the Dutch imaginary line through which English commerce might penetrate and then expand.

Mr. Brooke made a second voyage to the East in a brig which, in partnership with another, he had purchased and freighted for China; but this venture proved a failure, and the brig and cargo were sold in China at a loss.

In 1835, Mr. Thomas Brooke died, leaving to his son the sum of £30,000. James now saw that a chance was open to him of realising his youthful dream, and he bought a yacht, the *Royalist*, a schooner of 142 tons burden, armed with six-pounders and several swivels, and, after a preliminary cruise in the Mediterranean to train his crew, he sailed in December 1838, flying the flag of the Royal Yacht Squadron, for that enchanted group of islands—

> Those islands of the sea
> Where Nature rises to Fame's highest round.[1]

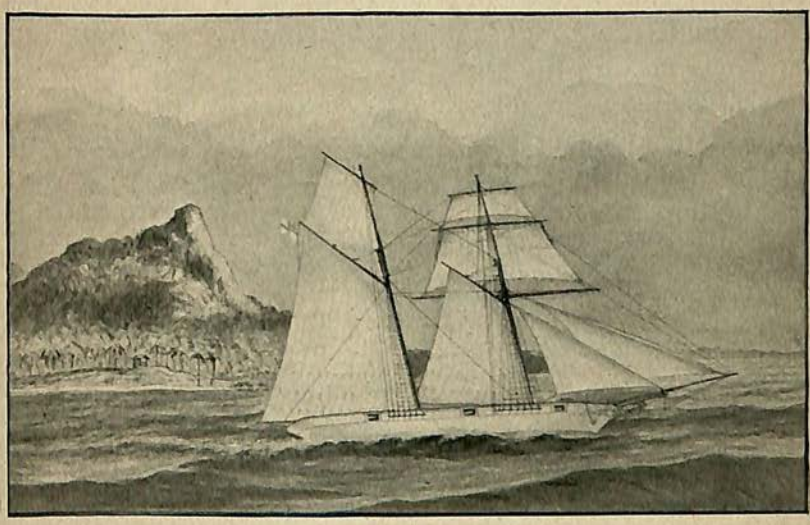
And as he wrote, to cast himself on the waters, like Southey's little book; but whether the world would know him after many days, was a question which, hoping the best, he could not answer with any degree of assurance.

He arrived in Singapore in May, 1839. The Rajah Muda Hasim of Sarawak had recently shown kind treatment to some English shipwrecked sailors, and Mr. Brooke was commissioned by the Governor and the Singapore Chamber of Commerce to convey letters of thanks and presents to the Rajah Muda in acknowledgment of his

[1] Camoen's *Lusiad* (Sir Richard Burton's translation.) Camoen here refers to the islands of the Malayan Archipelago, which he visited in his exile some 350 years ago.

humanity, exceptional in those days, and a marked contrast to the treatment afforded to the crew and passengers of the *Sultana* a little later by his sovereign, the Sultan of Bruni, which is recorded further on.[1] This chance diverted Mr. Brooke from his original project of going to Marudu Bay, the place he had indicated as being the best adapted for the establishment of a British settlement, and took him to the field of his life-long labours.

He left Singapore on July 27, 1839, full of hope and



"ROYALIST" OFF SANTUBONG.

confidence that something was to be done, and reaching the West Coast of Borneo surveyed some seventy miles of that coast before entering the Sarawak river, which was not then marked on the charts; for of Borneo at that time very little was known; its interior was a blank upon the maps, and its coast was set down by guess work on the Admiralty charts; so much so, that Mr. Brooke found Cape Datu placed some seventy to eighty miles too far to the east and north, and he was "obliged to clip some hundreds of miles of habitable land off the charts."

[1] St. John tells us that a few years before this an English ship that had put into the Sarawak river to water was treacherously seized; the Englishmen were murdered, and the Lascars sold into slavery.

Kuching,[1] the capital of Sarawak, is so called from a small stream that runs through the town into the main river, that a few miles below expands and forms a delta of many channels and mouths. The town, which is seated some twenty miles from the open sea, was founded by Pangiran Makota, when Bruni rule was established in Sarawak, and he was sent down as the Sultan's representative a few years previously to the arrival of Mr. Brooke. At this time the population, with the exception of a few Chinese traders and other eastern foreigners, consisted entirely of Bruni Malays to the number of about 800. The Sarawak Malays lived at Katupong,[2] a little higher up, and farther up again at Leda Tanah, under their head chief, the brave Datu Patinggi Ali.

A distinction must be made, which it will be as well to again note here, between the Malays of Bruni and those of Sarawak, in other works described—the former as Borneans, and the latter as Siniawans. They are very different in appearance, manners, and even in language. There are not many Brunis in Sarawak now. Most returned to their own country with Rajah Muda Hasim when he retired there in 1844, and others drifted thither later. All the Malays in Kuching, except a sprinkling of foreigners, are Sarawak Malays, the descendants of the so-called Siniawans.

The bay that lies between Capes Datu and Sipang is indeed a lovely one. To the right lies the splendid range of Poé, overtopping the lower, but equally beautiful, Gading hills; then the fantastic-shaped mountains of the interior; while to the left the range of Santubong end-on towards you looks like a solitary peak, rising as an island from the sea, as Teneriffe once appeared to me sailing by in the *Meander*. From these hills flow many streams which add to the beauty of the view. But the gems of the scene are the little emerald isles that are scattered over the surface of the bay, presenting their pretty beaches of glittering sand, or their lovely foliage drooping to kiss the rippling waves. There is no prettier spot (than the mouth of the Sarawak river); on the right bank rises the splendid peak of Santubong, over 2000 feet in height,[3] clothed from its summit to its base with noble vegetation, its magnificent

[1] *Anglice*, cat.

[2] A short time before the commencement of this history this place had been attacked by the Saribas Dayaks, and 120 people were slain.

[3] 3000 feet.

buttresses covered with lofty trees, showing over a hundred feet of stem without a branch, and at its base a broad beach of white sand fringed by graceful casuarinas, waving and trembling under the influence of the faintest breeze, and at that time thronged by wild hogs.[1]

On August 15, the *Royalist* cast anchor off the capital, and Mr. Brooke had an interview with the Rajah Muda, presented the letters and gifts, and was very graciously received. He was allowed to make excursions to Lundu, Samarahan, and Sadong, large rivers hitherto unknown to Europeans, and he added some seventy miles to his survey of the coast; but as the Malays and most of the Dayak tribes were in insurrection in the interior, travelling there was unsafe.

The Rajah Muda Hasim, the Bandahara of Bruni and the heir-presumptive to the throne, was a plain, middle-aged man, with gracious and courtly manners, amiable and well disposed, but weak and indolent. He was placed in a difficult position, which he had not the energy or the ability to fill. The Sultan of Bruni had confided the district of Sarawak some years previously to the Pangiran Makota as governor, a man utterly unprincipled, grasping, selfish, cruel, and cowardly, but "the most mild, the most gentlemanly rascal you can conceive";[2] and by his exactions and by forced labour at the antimony mines, he had driven the Sarawak Malays, as well as the Land-Dayaks, into open revolt. They proclaimed their independence of Bruni, and asserted that submission to the Sultan had been voluntary on their part, and on stipulated conditions that had not been carried out. For three years they had carried on their struggle against the Bruni tyrants, but, though far from being reduced, it became evident to them that unaided they could not attain their freedom. Surrender meant death to the chiefs and abject slavery to the people, and to their womankind something far worse than either, so in their extremity they appealed to the Dutch. A year before Mr. Brooke's arrival they had invited the Dutch to plant the Netherlands flag in their camp, and afterwards had sent an emissary to Batavia

[1] Spencer St. John, *Sir James Brooke*, 1879.

[2] Mr. Brooke. He was a good-looking man. Capt. the Hon. H. Keppel gives his portrait, the frontispiece to vol. i. of his *Expedition to Borneo of H.M.S. Dido*, which is incorrectly entitled the portrait of Rajah Muda Hasim.

to beg the assistance of the Governor-General, but open assistance was refused, though the Sultan of Sambas appears to have constantly supplied the rebels with ammunition and provisions. As Mr. Brooke had warned the Pangiran Makota, who had reason to fear Dutch aggression, the danger was not an open violation of their independence, but their coming on friendly terms—they might make war after having first gained a footing, not before. The Dutch had made great efforts to establish trade with Sarawak, in other words, to monopolise it, and through their vassal, the Sultan of Sambas, had offered assistance to open the antimony mines.

The Sultan of Bruni had sent his uncle, the Rajah Muda Hasim, to reduce the rebels, but without withdrawing Makota and checking his abuse of authority. A desultory war had been carried on without success under the direction of Makota, who was too cowardly himself to lead his Malay and Dayak levies into action, to storm the stockades of the insurgents, and to pursue them to their strongholds. The consequence was that anarchy prevailed, except in the immediate neighbourhood of the capital.

There was something in the frank eye, in the cheery self-confidence of Brooke that captivated the timid little Rajah Muda, who was not only unable to cope with the Malays in revolt, but was afraid of his neighbours, the Dutch, lest they should make the disturbances an excuse for intervention and annexation, and he hoped in his extremity to obtain some help from the British.

"Which is the cat and which is the mouse?" he asked in reference to the rival powers. "Britain is unquestionably the mouser," replied Brooke. But he did not add that the mouser was so gorged and lazy as only occasionally to stretch forth a paw.

Mr. Brooke bade his friends good-bye on September 20, after having received a pressing invitation from the Rajah Muda to revisit him, and he begged Brooke not to forget him. Leaving the *Royalist* at Muaratebas, Brooke visited the Sadong river, where he made the acquaintance of Sherip Sahap,[1] a powerful half-bred Arab chief and ruler of that

[1] Spelt Sahib by Mr. Brooke in his letters and journals, and by others, but correctly

river, who in later days was to give Brooke so much trouble. He returned to the *Royalist* on the 27th, and intended to sail the next morning, but was delayed by a startling incident that gave him his first experience of the piratical habits of the Saribas Dayaks. The boat of Penglima Rajah (the Rajah's captain), who was to pilot the *Royalist* over the bar, and which was lying inshore of the yacht, was attacked in the middle of the night, but the report of a gun and the display of a blue light from the yacht caused the Dayaks to decamp hurriedly, though not before they had seriously wounded the Penglima and three of his crew. Mr. Brooke waited until the wounded were sufficiently recovered to be sent to Kuching, and, after he had paid a flying visit to that place at the urgent request of the Rajah, sailed for Singapore on October 3.

The history of his late cruise, to quote Mr. Brooke, had agitated the society in Singapore, and whilst the merchants presented him with an address of thanks, the Governor became cooler towards him. The former foresaw an access of trade, the latter was nervous of political embarrassments.

He would fain have me lay aside all politics, but whilst I see such treachery and baseness on one part (the Dutch), and such weakness, imbecility, and indifference on the other (the English), I will continue to upraise my voice at fitting seasons. I will not leave my native friends to be deceived and betrayed by either white nation, and (what the governor does not like) I will speak bold truths to native ears.

The Dutch trading regulations weighed on this island as they did on all others within their influence. Sir Stamford Raffles, in his *History of Java*, 1830, tells us that by an edict of 1767, trading in opium, pepper, and all spices was prohibited in the Archipelago to all persons under *pain of death*, and other severe penalties were imposed upon those trading in other commodities. The quantity of gunpowder and shot that might be carried by any vessel was restricted, and the punishment for carrying more than was permitted was the confiscation of the vessel and corporal

his name was Sahap. He had a reputation for bravery, and was styled by the Sekrang Dayaks "Bujang Brani," the brave man.

punishment. Vessels were not allowed to sail from any part of the Java coast where there was not a Company's Resident. Those from Banka and Beliton could only trade to Palembang (Sumatra). Navigation from Celebes and Sumbawa was prohibited under pain of confiscation of vessel and cargo. The China junks were permitted to trade at Batavia and Banjermasin alone. In all there were thirty-one articles of restriction, "serving to shackle every movement of commerce, and to extinguish every spirit of enterprise, for the narrow, selfish purposes of what may be called the fanaticism of gain." The consequence was that honest traffic was paralysed, and an opportunity and indirect encouragement given to piracy. Indeed, the Dutch winked at this as it hampered smuggling by European and native traders. They resented it only when their own trade was interfered with by the marauders.

After visiting the Celebes, where he spent four months, Mr. Brooke sailed for Sarawak from Singapore on August 18, 1840. His kindly feeling for the Rajah Muda Hasim prompted him to pay another visit to Sarawak, taking it on his way to Manila and China. He found the condition of the country as distracted as ever, "with no probability of any termination of a state of affairs so adverse to every object which I had in view," and so decided to quit the scene and proceed on his voyage. On notifying his departure to the Rajah, he was urgently pressed to remain; every topic was exhausted to excite his compassion. The Rajah laid his difficulties before him, and expressed "his resolution to die here rather than abandon his undertaking —to die deserted and disgraced"; and it was compassion for his miserable situation that induced Mr. Brooke to alter his intention.

The rebellion had lasted for nearly four years, and for the efforts made to quell it might well last for a century, and the whole country, except Kuching, become independent. Starvation had compelled many of the Land-Dayaks to submit, but that was the only advantage that had been gained. Hasim was in ill odour at Bruni because he had effected nothing, and the Orang Kaya di Gadong, a Bruni

minister, had been sent by the Sultan to stir him up to greater activity. But how to exert himself, how with cowardly pangirans to come to close quarters with the rebels he could not see, and in his helplessness and discouragement he caught at the opportunity offered by the arrival of Brooke.

With some reluctance Mr. Brooke consented to assist Hasim against the insurgents, and proceeded to Siniawan; but after having been up-river a short time he returned to Kuching, disgusted by the supineness and inertness of Makota and the other leaders, and announced his intention of sailing for Manila. Hasim saw that Brooke's departure would deprive him of his last chance of reducing the rebels, and that he would have to return to Bruni in disgrace. Again he urged Brooke to stay, and he offered him the country if he would return up-river and take command of his forces. "He offered me," wrote Brooke, "the country of Siniawan and Sarawak, with its government and trade;" in addition he offered to grant him the title of Rajah.

Hasim had been placed in Sarawak for a purpose, which he was wholly unable to effect; as he was heir-presumptive[1] to the throne of Bruni, he was impatient at what he considered his exile from the capital. Could the insurrection be subdued he would be re-instated in the favour of his nephew, and might return to Bruni to defeat the machinations of his enemies there, leaving the government of Sarawak in the strong hands of Brooke.

Mr. Brooke hesitated for some time, as the offer had been imposed by necessity, but finally agreed, and

[1] There is no strict law of primogeniture in Bruni, otherwise Rajah Muda Hasim could not have been heir-presumptive. As he was of royal blood, and the prince most fitted to succeed, he was looked upon as the heir to the throne, and was so acknowledged (publicly in 1846) by the Sultan, and was therefore more correctly heir-apparent. At this time Sultan Omar Ali had two sons, and the eldest, also named Hasim, must have been about thirty-five years of age. There was a disgraceful harem scandal in connection with their birth, which pointed to their having been the sons of a Nakoda, or merchant. Though this appears to have been generally credited, Hasim nevertheless became the 24th Sultan in 1885.

It may be noted here that Omar Ali himself was only *de facto* Sultan, as he was never able to obtain the legal investiture which in Bruni constitutes an election to the throne *de jure*, and which confers upon the sovereign the title of *Iang de Pertuan*, the Lord who rules, the most exalted title, and one which he never assumed.

promised the assistance required. With ten of his English crew and two guns, he joined the Rajah's mixed force of Malays, Dayaks, and Chinese, and proceeded against the insurgents. As was their wont, the pangirans in command hung back and would not expose their precious persons to danger, with the notable exception of the Pangiran Bedrudin, half-brother to the Rajah Muda Hasim. This was Brooke's first meeting with Bedrudin. He was greatly impressed with his frank but overawing and stately demeanour, and a warm friendship soon sprang up between them, which lasted until the death of this ill-fated prince, who justly earned a reputation for bravery and constancy, the only one of the royal princes of Bruni in whom these qualities were combined.

To Mr. Brooke's regret, Bedrudin was shortly withdrawn by his brother, and the other pangirans, led by Makota, thwarted him in every forward movement, to disguise their own cowardice. Finally, after several bloodless engagements and bombardments, communication was opened with Sherip Mat Husain,[1] one of the rebel leaders, and he came to see Mr. Brooke under a flag of truce, which would have received little respect had it not been for the stern measures taken by the latter. This meeting led to an interview between the Malay rebel chiefs and Mr. Brooke, and they submitted, but only on the understanding that Brooke was henceforth to be the Rajah, and that he would restrain the oppression of the pangirans. On these terms they laid down their arms, and then it was with great difficulty that Brooke succeeded in wringing from the Rajah Muda a consent that their lives should be spared, and that consent was only reluctantly given on Brooke rising up to bid the Rajah Muda farewell; but the wives and children of the principal chiefs, to the number of over one hundred, were taken from them by Hasim as hostages. They "were treated with kindness and preserved from injury or wrong."[2]

Some delay ensued in the investiture of Brooke with the

[1] Or an abbreviation of Muhammad Husain. In former works he is incorrectly styled Moksain (for Matsain), following Mr. Brooke's published letters and journals, which were badly edited in regard to native names and words.

[2] Mr. Brooke.

governorship. Hasim was disposed to shuffle, and Makota, who feared his exactions would be interfered with, used all his power to prevent it. Hoping it would content Brooke, the Rajah Muda had drawn up an agreement which was only to the purport that he was to reside in Sarawak in order to seek for profit, an agreement which the Rajah Muda explained was merely to be shown to the Sultan in the first place, and that it was not intended as a substitute for that which had been agreed upon between themselves, and would be granted in due course. Hasim was between two stools: his duty in respect to his promise to Brooke, whose friendship and support were necessary to him; and his fear of the party led by Makota in Sarawak, but still more powerfully represented in Bruni, who foresaw, as well as he did himself, the end of their rule of tyranny if once such an advocate for reform as Mr. Brooke were allowed to gather up the reins of power.

Brooke accepted this equivocal arrangement, and, trusting in the Rajah Muda's good faith, to establish trade and communication with Singapore, went to the expense of buying and freighting the schooner *Swift* of ninety tons with a general cargo. On her arrival from Singapore the Rajah Muda took over the whole cargo, promising antimony ore in exchange, but this promise also he showed no intention of fulfilling—in fact it never was fulfilled. After this cargo had been obtained the Rajah Muda became cool to Brooke, evaded all discussion about the settlement of the country, and even went so far as to deny that he had ever made the unsolicited promise to transfer the government to him; and a plot was attempted to involve him in a dispute with the Dutch at Sambas.

To ruin Mr. Brooke's prestige with the Land-Dayaks, Malays, and Chinese, as their protector, a crafty scheme was devised by Makota, to which he induced the Rajah to grant his consent. He invited a party of 2500 Sea-Dayaks from Sekrang to ascend the Sarawak river and massacre the Land-Dayaks, Malays, and Chinese in the interior. They arrived at Kuching, and, with the addition of a number of Malays as guides, started up the river. But Brooke, highly incensed, retired to the *Royalist*, and at once pre-

pared that vessel and the *Swift* for action. This had the desired effect. Hasim was cowed; "he denied all knowledge of it; but the knowledge was no less certain, and the measure his own."[1] He threw the blame on Makota, and, yielding to Brooke's insistence, sent a messenger up river after the fleet to recall it,—a command that could not be disobeyed, as Brooke held command of the route by which they must return. Sulkily and resentfully did the Sekrang Dayaks return, without heads, and without plunder. And for Makota it was a case of the biter bit, as he had unwittingly enhanced Brooke's prestige. The oppressed people now learnt that Brooke was not only determined to protect them, but that he had the power to do it—a power greater than Makota's; and this strengthened his hands, for many who had wavered through doubt on this point and fear of Makota, now threw in their lot with him, as Makota was shortly to discover to his cost.

"The very idea," wrote Brooke in his Journal, "of letting 2500 wild devils loose in the interior of the country is horrible. What object can the Malays[2] have in destroying their own country and people so wantonly? The Malays take part in these excursions, and thirty men joined the Sekrangs on the present occasion, and consequently they share the plunder, and share largely. Probably Muda Hasim would have twenty slaves (women and children), and these twenty being redeemed at the low rate of twenty reals each makes 400 reals, besides other plunder amounting to one or two hundred reals more. Inferior pangirans would, of course, take likewise."

Mr. Brooke had now been put off for five months, and for six weeks had withdrawn from all intercourse with Rajah Muda Hasim. As he wrote, "I have done this man many benefits; and, if he prove false after all his promises, I will put that mark of shame upon him that death would be lighter." This was no idle threat, for he sent a final demand to the Rajah Muda either to perform his promise or to repay him all his outlay, and a warning that should Hasim do neither he would take sure means to make him; and the means were at hand, for on his return from Singapore Mr. Brooke had found the people of Sarawak again at issue with

[1] Mr. Brooke. [2] The Bruni, not the Sarawak Malays.

their ruler, and had once more thrown off their allegiance to the Sultan. They then offered him that allegiance, and their support to drive Rajah Muda Hasim and his followers out of the country; this offer was, however, declined. But a circumstance occurred that precipitated matters. Makota attempted to poison Brooke's interpreter by mixing arsenic with his rice. Through the indiscretion of a subordinate the plot was discovered, and Brooke immediately laid the facts before the Rajah Muda, as well as "a little treasury" of grievances and crimes against Makota, and demanded an inquiry. "The demand, as usual, was met by vague promises of future investigation, and Makota seemed to triumph in the success of his villainy, but the moment for action had now arrived, and my conscience told me that I was bound no longer to submit to such injustice, and I was resolved to test the strength of our respective parties." [1] The *Royalist's* guns were loaded, and her broadside brought to bear, and Mr. Brooke landed with a small armed party. He demanded and immediately obtained an audience, and pointed out Makota's tyranny and oppression of all classes, and his determination to attack him, and drive him out of the country. Not a single man upheld Makota, whilst the Malays rallied around Mr. Brooke. This was a test of public opinion to which Makota had to bow, and he was deposed from his governorship. Mr. Brooke's public installation immediately followed, the Rajah Muda Hasim informing the people that he was henceforth to rule over them. On the 24th of September, 1841, a memorable day in the history not only of Sarawak but of the whole of North-Western Borneo, he was declared Rajah and Governor of Sarawak, amidst the roar of cannon and a general display of flags and banners on the shore and the vessels on the river.[2]

On that day he became Rajah of Sarawak, though a feudatory Rajah, a position which he was not content to hold for long, as such a position would have proved untenable.

Sarawak was then of very limited extent; it was a little governorship extending from Cape Datu to the mouth of the

[1] Mr. Brooke. [2] *Idem.*

Sadong, and included, besides smaller streams, the Lundu, Sarawak, and Samarahan rivers; and this district, about 3000 square miles in area, is, with the inclusion of the Sadong river, now known as Sarawak Proper. In the days of Hasim Sarawak was not a raj, but a province under a governor. Hasim was not actually the Rajah of Sarawak, though his high birth gave him the right to the courtesy title of Rajah. His real title was the Pangiran Muda;[1] Muda is inseparable from the title, and was not a part of his name. Pangiran Muda, the heir to the throne, is the correct Bruni title. Rajah Muda (young Rajah) also means heir-apparent.

The districts from Sarawak up to Bintulu, and beyond, formed separate provinces, and were under separate governors, but Hasim's high rank naturally gave him some influence over these officials. Sadong was governed by Sherip Sahap, his subjects being Land-Dayaks; his power, however, extended to the head of that river. Sherip Japar of Lingga, Sherip Mular of Sekrang, and Sherip Masahor of Serikei, held nominal authority only over the main population of their respective districts occupied by the Sea-Dayaks, for these people acknowledged no government, and lived in independence even in the vicinity of the Malays. Such, moreover, was the case with the Saribas, which was nominally governed by Malay chiefs. The districts of Muka, Oya, and Bintulu were under Bruni pangirans, but, having only Melanaus to govern, their control was complete. In the Baram, a river inhabited by warlike Kayans and Kenyahs, the Malays, nominal rulers and traders, lived on sufferance alone, and so it was in the Sea-Dayak countries of the Batang Lupar, Saribas, and Rejang. Over the Malays, the Land-Dayaks, and the Melanaus, the Bruni Government had power—the Sea-Dayaks and Kayans scorned it. The sherips, as the title denotes, are of Arab origin, and they claim descent from the Prophet. They are half-breeds, and were dangerous men. Earl, in his *Eastern Seas*, 1837, says:—

[1] By which he was generally referred to, both in documents and verbally, by the Malays of Bruni and Sarawak. "Rajah of Sarawak" was a complimentary title given to him by Europeans only. He has been frequently styled *Muda* Hasim by former writers; this would be unintelligible to a Malay.

"The pirates who infest the Archipelago consist wholly of the free Mahomedan states in Sumatra, Lingin, Borneo, Magindano, and Sulu (and he should have added of the Malay Peninsula), those natives who have remained uncontaminated by the detestable doctrines of the Arabs, never being known to engage in like pursuits."

Again :—

The genuine Arabs are often high-minded, enterprising men, but their half-caste descendants who swarm in the Archipelago comprise the most despicable set of wretches in existence. Under the name of religion they have introduced among the natives the vilest system of intolerance and wickedness imaginable; and those places in which they have gained an ascendency [1] are invariably converted into dens of infamy and piracy.

Sir Stamford Raffles says "they are commonly nothing better than manumitted slaves, and they hold like robbers the offices they obtain as sycophants, and cover all with the sanctimonious veil of religious hypocrisy."

And such were the sherips of Borneo with whom the English Rajah had to deal, and whose power he eventually broke. There are many of these to this day in Sarawak, but they have been converted into harmless members of the community, and some have been good Government officials, notably Sherip Putra, who died in June, 1906, after having served the Government well and faithfully for twenty-two years; and he was the son of Sherip Sahap, and the nephew of Sherip Mular.

The condition of the country on Rajah Brooke's accession is best described in his own words. After relating the devastations committed by the piratical and head-hunting Dayaks of Saribas and Sekrang, the Rajah goes on to say :—

It is of the hill Dayaks,[2] however, I would particularly write, for a more wretched, oppressed race is not to be found, or one more deserving the commiseration of the humane. Though industrious they never reap what they sow; though their country is rich in produce, they are obliged to yield it all to their oppressors; though

[1] Such was this ascendency that they became the founders of the present ruling dynasties of Bruni (Chap. II., p. 1), Palembang (Sumatra), Pontianak, Sambas, Mindanau, and Sulu, and probably of other native states.

[2] Land-Dayaks.

yielding all beyond their bare sustenance, they rarely can preserve half *their children*, and often—too often—are robbed of them all, with their wives.[1] All that rapacity and oppression can effect is exhausted, and the only happiness that ever falls to the lot of these unhappy tribes is getting one tyrant instead of five thousand. Indeed, it is quite useless to try to explain the miserable condition of this country, where for the last ten years there has been no government; where intrigue and plunder form the occupation of all the higher classes; where a poor man to possess beyond his clothes is a crime; where lying is a virtue, religion dead, and where cheating is so

LAND-DAYAK VILLAGE.

common; and last, where the ruler, Muda Hasim, is so weak, that he has lost all authority except in name and observance.

And further:—

All those who frequent the sea-shore lead a life of constant peri from roving Dayaks and treacherous Malays, and Illanuns and Balaninis, the regular pirates. It is a life of watchfulness, hide-and-seek, and fight or flight, and in the course of each year many lose their lives or their liberty.

This is the country I have taken upon myself to govern with

[1] Shortly before Rajah Brooke's arrival, Sherip Sahap with a large force of Sekrang Dayaks had attacked the Sau tribe of Land-Dayaks in Upper Sarawak. Many were killed, their villages plundered and burnt, and nearly all the surviving women and children, to the number of some two hundred and fifty, carried off into slavery. The Rajah eventually recovered nearly all.

small means, few men, and, in short, without any of the requisites which could insure success; I have distraction within and intrigue abroad, and I have the weakest of the weak,[1] a rotten staff to depend upon for my authority.

To add to his troubles, the season was one of famine following on intestine troubles. So poor were the people, that, again to quote the Rajah: "daily, poor wretches in the last stage of starvation float down the river, and crawl to my house to beg a little, little rice."

One of the first acts of the Rajah was to obtain the return to their families of the women and children of the late rebel Malay chiefs, who had been detained by Hasim now for nine months. He then recalled the Sarawak Malays, who, after submission to Hasim, had retired with their chiefs to distant parts, not trusting the good faith of their Malay Rajah and his right-hand man, Makota. The Bruni datus appointed by the former Governor were displaced, and the old Sarawak Malay datus, who had been in rebellion against the Bruni Government, and who owed their lives to Rajah Brooke's intercession, were reinstated, and in their families the offices remain to this day. Who these chiefs were at that time there seems to exist some doubt, with the exception of the premier datu, the Datu Patinggi Ali, who fell gallantly fighting for the Government three years after he had been reinstated, and the Datu Temanggong Mersal. The old Datu Bandar, Rancha, had died before this, and no one appears to have succeeded him directly, but Datu Patinggi Ali's son-in-law, Haji Abdul Gapur, and his son Muhammad Lana, evidently held office of some kind as native chiefs. On the Datu Patinggi's death, Haji Gapur succeeded him in office, and Muhammad Lana became the Datu Bandar. When Haji Gapur was dismissed in 1854, another son of the Datu Patinggi Ali, Haji Bua Hasan, was made the Imaum, and a few years afterwards Datu Imaum, but no one was then, or has since been, appointed to the office of Datu Patinggi.

On Muhammad Lana's death, his brother Haji Bua Hasan became Datu Bandar, and, shortly afterwards, another relative, Haji Abdul Karim, was appointed Datu Imaum, and

[1] Meaning Rajah Muda Hasim.

he was succeeded on his death in 1877 by Haji Muhammad Taim, the youngest son of the Datu Patinggi Ali. The Datu Bandar, Haji Bua Hasan, died in harness in 1905, over one hundred years of age, and has been succeeded by his son, Muhammad Kasim, formerly the Datu Muda; another son, Haji Muhammad Ali, is the Datu Hakim. These offices are not hereditary, so this narration will show how well the family of gallant old Patinggi Ali, the direct descendant of the original founder of Sarawak, Rajah Jarom, with the sole exception of Haji Gapur, have earned and retained the confidence of the Government, and how honourably they have maintained their position.

The Datu Temanggong Mersal belonged to another family, but he and his sons were not the less staunch; the eldest, brave Abang Pata, rendered the Government very signal services, and the younger, Muhammad Hasan, succeeded his father as Temanggong.

The only one who betrayed the trust reposed in him was the Datu Patinggi Haji Gapur. Of him, as well as the others, we shall hear more in the sequel.

About the same time that the old chiefs were reinstated the Rajah instituted a Court of Justice, in which he presided, and was assisted in dispensing justice by the brothers of Rajah Muda Hasim, and he promulgated the following simple laws, of which this is a summary:—

James Brooke, Rajah of Sarawak, makes known to all men the following regulations:—

1. That murder, robbery, and other heinous crimes will be punished according to the written laws of Borneo;[1] and no man committing such offences will escape, if, after fair inquiry, he be found guilty.
2. All men, whether Malays, Chinese, or Dayaks are permitted to trade or to labour according to their pleasure, and to enjoy their gains.
3. All roads will be open, and all boats coming from other parts are free to enter the river and depart without let or hindrance.
4. Trade, in all its branches, will be free, with the exception of antimony ore, which the Governor holds in his own hands,

[1] Bruni.

but which no person is forced to work, and which will be paid for at a proper price when obtained.

5. It is ordered that no persons going amongst the Dayaks shall disturb them or gain their goods under false pretences. The revenue will be collected by the three Datus bearing the seal of the Governor, and (except this yearly demand from the Government) they are to give nothing to any other person; nor are they obliged to sell their goods except they please, and at their own prices.
6. The revenue shall be fixed, so that every one may know certainly how much he has to contribute yearly to support the Government.
7. Weights and measures shall be settled and money current in the country, and doits [1] introduced, that the poor may purchase food cheaply.
8. Obedience to the ordinances will be strictly enforced.

The Rajah's next step was to redress some of the wrongs to which the unhappy people had been subjected, and by ameliorating their condition to gain their confidence. The Rajah Muda Hasim and his brothers were in his way, "and the intriguing, mean, base Brunis, who depended upon the support of the pangirans to escape punishment when guilty;" [2] but, nevertheless, at the end of the year he was able to write that he had done much good—that he had saved the lives of many people, restored many captives to their families, and freed many slaves from bondage, and above all, that he had repressed vice, and had assisted the distressed.

The Rajah had also to safeguard his country; to prepare to take the offensive against the Malays and Sea-Dayaks of the Sekrang and Saribas; and to guard against the plots and designs of his neighbours the sherips, who viewed with no friendly eye the establishment of a government in Sarawak, having as its principal objects the suppression of piracy and lawlessness. It was a menace to them, and they knew it, and to retain their power they were prepared to go to any length. Already Sherip Sahap and his brother Sherip Mular had sent people against the Sempro and Sentah Dayaks; and the former had endeavoured to withdraw the allegiance of the datus from the Rajah, but in

[1] *Duit*, Malay for a cent. [2] Rajah Brooke.

this he failed. As a defensive measure the Rajah built a fort and palisaded his little town. He also constructed war-boats for the protection of the coast, and to take the offensive, which he saw must be inevitable.

The Rajah soon showed the Saribas the power of his arm. Thirteen of their large war-boats appeared off the coast on a piratical cruise, and these were met and attacked by three of the Rajah's well-armed boats and driven back with heavy loss. Retaliation was threatened, and the Dayaks prepared, but it was a long time before they again appeared, and the terror of Brooke's name kept them off Sarawak. At this time Sherip Sahap also received a lesson. He had sent a Pangiran Bedrudin to Kuching on a secret mission, and the pangiran on his way down river fell in with and attacked a Chinese boat, wounding two of the crew, one mortally. The Rajah immediately gave chase, and after eight days came up with them. One of the pangiran's crew, a Lanun penglima, amoked, but was killed by the Datu Patinggi Ali before he could do any harm; the rest surrendered, and were taken to Kuching, where the pangiran, and another, a relation of his, were executed, and the crew imprisoned.

A month later, two Singgi Dayak chiefs, Pa Rimbun and Pa Tumo, for killing Segu Dayaks within the State, were arrested and executed. These examples showed his neighbours that the Rajah was determined to protect his people; and it showed the people that the law would be administered with an equal and firm hand.

But as yet the ratification of his appointment had not been made, and on July 14th, 1842, the Rajah left for Bruni to obtain from the Sultan the confirmation of his nomination by Hasim, and to effect, if possible, a reconciliation between the Sultan and his uncle, as he was naturally desirous to get the latter, his brothers, and their Bruni followers, away from Sarawak, so as to give stability to the Government, and to prevent a needless drain upon the treasury. Another object the Rajah had in view was to obtain the release of about twenty-five Lascars belonging to an English ship, the *Lord Melbourne*, which had lately been wrecked, and who had

found their way to Bruni, where they were being detained in captivity.

As it happened, another English ship, the *Sultana*, had about eighteen months previously been wrecked on the N.W. coast, struck by lightning, and the captain, his wife, two passengers, one a lady, and some English seamen, had

LAND-DAYAK HEAD-HOUSE.

escaped to Bruni in the long boat; the Lascars had landed farther north, and had been captured and sold into slavery by Sherip Usman. The Sultan seized these unfortunate people, and robbed them of their money, some jewels, and their boat. He further compelled them to sign bonds to himself for considerable sums of money, and he had treated them with harshness and inhumanity.

On hearing of this Mr. Brooke had sent his yacht, the *Royalist*, to Bruni to obtain their release, but this had been

refused by the Sultan, and then he communicated with Singapore. The East India Company's Steamer *Diana* was despatched to Bruni, ran up the river and pointed its guns on the palace. The Sultan was so thoroughly alarmed that he surrendered the captives, after a detention of eight months, and the dread of the "fire-ship" remained on him, so that when the Rajah arrived he was in a compliant mood, and received him most cordially.

It may be as well here to give a description of Bruni and of its Court.

The Bruni river flows into a noble bay, across which to the north lies the island of Labuan. Above the town the river is very small, and rises but some fifteen to twenty miles inland. Where the town is, the river is very broad, forming a large lake. The town is commanded by hills once under cultivation; on an island at the mouth of the entrance are the shattered remains of an old Portuguese fort, which was still standing, though ruinous, when Hunt visited the place in 1809. The town itself has been designated the "Venice of Borneo" by old writers, a description to which the Italian Beccari rightly objected,[1] and is mainly built on piles driven into the mud on a shallow in the middle of the lake, the houses occupying wooden platforms elevated some ten feet above the reach of the tide. Communication between them is effected by canoes, in which the women daily go through the town selling provisions. It is, in a word, similar to the palafitte villages found in prehistoric times in the lakes of Switzerland and Lombardy. A part of the town, including the houses of the Sultan and the wazirs, is situated on the left bank of the river. It is the Bruni of Pigafetta's time, though sadly reduced in size and importance. Then the Sultan's palace was enclosed by a strong brick wall,[2] with

[1] "I admit that Bruni has its points, but what irony to compare for a moment the city of marble palaces with the mass of miserable huts which a single match could easily reduce to ashes."—Beccari, *op. cit.* The Rajah called the place a "Venice of hovels." Mercator in his Atlas describes it as "being situated on a salt-water lagoon like Venice," hence probably it became known as the Venice of Borneo.

[2] *Kota batu*, stone fort. The name still remains. It was built towards the close of the fifteenth century by Sherip Ali, the first Arab Sultan, with the aid of the Chinese subjects his wife's mother had brought to Bruni. The city was then nearer

barbicans mounting fifty-six cannon, now it is but a roughly built barn-like shed. Gone are the richly caparisoned elephants, and gone too is all the old pride, pomp, and panoply, including the spoons of gold, which particularly struck the old voyager.[1] Bruni has no defences now, but, at the period of which we are writing, there were batteries planted on each side of the inlet commanding the approach, also two forts on the heights, and one battery on a tongue of land that looked down the estuary, and which could rake a fleet advancing towards the town, whilst the batteries on the two banks poured in a flank fire.

When the tide goes out the mud is most offensive to European nostrils, as all the filth and offal is cast into it from the platforms, and left there to decompose. The town at the time of the Rajah's visit, was in a condition of squalid wretchedness—the buildings, all of wood and leaf matting, were in a tumbledown state; and the population was mainly composed of slaves and the hangers on of the Sultan, the nobles, and other members of the upper classes. The Sultan was a man past fifty years of age, short and puffy in person, with a countenance indicative of imbecility. In his journal the Rajah wrote:

His right hand is garnished with an extra diminutive thumb, the natural member being crooked and distorted.[2] His mind, indexed by his face, seems to be a chaos of confusion, without dignity and without good sense. He can neither read nor write, is guided by the last speaker; and his advisers, as might be expected, are of the lower order, and mischievous from their ignorance and their greediness. He is always talking, and generally joking; and

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the mouth of the river. It was moved to its present position by Sultan Muadin about 200 years ago.

[1] Magellan, *Hakluyt Society*, and the Portuguese Jorge de Menezes, who visited Bruni five years after Pigafetta, notices that the city was surrounded with a wall of brick, and possessed some noble edifices. Other early voyagers describe the sultans and rulers of Malayan States as maintaining great style, and their equipments,—such as swords of state, saddles, chairs, eating and drinking utensils—as being of pure gold. Allowing for some exaggeration, this would still point to a former condition of prosperity which enabled rulers and nobles to keep up a pageantry which has long since vanished.

[2] This malformation, according to the laws of Bruni, would have disqualified him for the throne, for these provide that no person in any way imbecile in mind or deformed in person can enjoy the regal dignity, whatever title to it his birth might have given him.—Sir Hugh Low, *op. cit.* p. 108.

the most serious subjects never meet with five minutes' consecutive attention. His rapacity is carried to such an excess as to astonish a European, and is evinced in a thousand mean ways. The presents I made him were unquestionably handsome, but he was not content without begging from me the share I had reserved for the other pangirans; and afterwards solicited mere trifles such as sugar, penknives, and the like. To crown all he was incessantly asking what was left in the vessel, and when told the truth—that I was stripped bare as a tree in winter—he frequently returned to the charge.

The Court at Bruni consisted of the Pangiran Mumin, the Sultan's uncle by marriage, a fairly well-disposed man, though a friend of Makota, but of no ability, avaricious, and with the mind of a huckster, who afterwards became Sultan. There were several uncles of the Sultan, but they were devoid of influence, and were mostly absent in Sarawak, whereas the Pangiran Usup, an illegitimate son of Sultan Muhammad Tejudin, and consequently a left-handed uncle to the reigning Sultan,—a man crafty, unscrupulous, and ambitious,—held sway over the mind of his nephew, and induced him to look with suspicion on his uncles of legitimate birth. This man was in league with the pirates, and a determined opponent of British interference. Consequently, though outwardly most friendly, he was bitterly opposed to the white Rajah, against whom he was already plotting to accomplish his eviction, or his death. Though Pangiran Usup was well aware of the Rajah's determination to stamp out piracy and oppression, yet he was not wise enough to foresee that to measure his strength against a chivalrous and resolute Englishman, who had even a stronger support behind him than those forces he was already slowly and surely gathering around himself, must be futile, and that it would end in his own ruin. Among the Sultan's legitimate uncles the only man of ability and integrity was the Pangiran Bedrudin, who had accompanied the Rajah to Bruni, and who was always frank with him and supported his schemes.

The Rajah had daily interviews with the Sultan, who expressed a great personal regard for him, and frequently swore "eternal friendship," clasping his hand and repeating

"*amigo saya, amigo saya.*"[1] He readily confirmed the cession made by Rajah Muda Hasim, being satisfied with the amount promised as his share of the Sarawak revenue, and said, "I wish you to be there; I do not wish anybody else; you are my *amigo*, and it is nobody's business but mine; the country is mine, and if I please to give you all, I can."

The deed to which Rajah Muda Hasim had affixed his seal on September 24, 1841, was to the following effect:—

> That the country and government of Sarawak is made over to Mr. Brooke (to be held under the crown of Bruni), with all its revenues and dependencies, on the yearly payment of $2500. That Mr. Brooke is not to infringe upon the customs or religion of the people; and in return, that no person is to interfere with him in the management of the country.

The confirmatory deed was executed on August 1, 1842, and was in tenor and purport similar to that granted by Hasim, with the exception of an additional clause precluding the alienation of Sarawak by the Rajah without the consent of the Sultan.

The Sultan also told the Rajah that it would be a delight to him to welcome both his uncles, Hasim and Bedrudin, back to Bruni, and begged the Rajah to carry for him a friendly letter to the former, conveying assurance that he was completely reconciled to him. Bruni, he said, would never be well until his return. The Lascars of the *Lord Melbourne* were at once given up, and the Rajah also procured the release of three of the *Sultana's* Lascars, who had been transferred to Bruni masters. He remained at Bruni for ten days—a period, as he wrote, "quite sufficient to discover to me the nakedness of the land, their civil dissensions, and the total decay of their power, internal and external."

On his return the Rajah received a cordial welcome, for it was believed that he would certainly be killed in Bruni; and on September 18, the deed was read appointing

[1] *Saya*, or more correctly, *sahaya* (mis-spelt *suya* in the Rajah's badly edited journals) is the Malay for I, mine; so *amigo saya* would be, My friend. *Amigo* was one of the few Spanish words the Sultan had.

him to hold the government of Sarawak The ceremony was impressive, but it nearly became tragical. We will give the Rajah's own description of it. After the deed had been read—

> The Rajah (Muda Hasim) descended, and said aloud "If any one present disowns or contests the Sultan's appointment, let him now declare." All were silent. He next turned to the Patinggis and asked them. They were obedient to the will of the Sultan. Then came the other pangirans. "Is there any pangiran or any young Rajah that contests the question? Pangiran der Makota, what do you say?' Makota expressed his willingness to obey. One or two other obnoxious pangirans, who had always opposed themselves to me, were each in turn challenged, and forced to promise obedience. The Rajah then waved his sword, and with a loud voice exclaimed, "Whoever he is that disobeys the Sultan's mandate now received I will separate his skull." At the moment some ten of his brothers jumped from the verandah, and, drawing their long krisses, began to flourish and dance about, thrusting close to Makota, striking the pillar above his head, and pointing their weapons at his breast. This *amusement*, the violence of motion, the freedom from restraint, this explosion of a long pent up animosity, roused all their passions; and had Makota, through an excess of fear or an excess of bravery, started up he would have been slain, and other blood would have been spilt. But he was quiet, with his face pale and subdued, and, as shortly as decency would permit after the riot had subsided, took his leave.

The Rajah now ordered Makota to leave the country, an order that could not be ignored, though he kept deferring his departure on one pretext after another, and it was not until the arrival of the *Dido* some eight months later that he quitted Sarawak, and that suddenly. He then joined Sherip Sahap at Sadong, and when that piratical chief's power was broken, he retired along with him to Patusan. Makota was captured after the destruction of that place in 1844, but, unfortunately, the Rajah spared his life. He then retired to Bruni, there to continue his plots against the English, and in 1845 was commissioned by the Sultan to murder Rajah Brooke, but found that the execution of this design would be too distinctly dangerous; and, though he bearded the lion in his den, it was only in the guise of a beggar. At Bruni he rose to power, and, as

already related in chapter II., became a scourge to the natives in that part of the sultanate. His end was this:—In November, 1858, he headed a raid at Awang in the Limbang to sweep together a number of Bisaya girls to fill his harem, when he was fallen upon by the natives at night time and killed.

The Rajah now set to work in earnest to put the Government on a sound footing. He made no attempt to introduce a brand new constitution and laws, but took what already existed. He found the legal code was just enough on paper, but had been over-ridden and nullified by the lawless pangirans. All that was necessary was to enforce the existing laws, modifying the penalties where too cruel and severe, and introducing fresh laws as occasion required. "I hate," he wrote in October, "the idea of an Utopian government, with laws cut and dried ready for the natives, being introduced. Governments, like clothes, will not suit everybody, and certainly a people who gradually develop their government, though not a good one, are nearer happiness and stability than a government of the best which is fitted at random. I am going on slowly and surely, basing everything on their own laws, consulting all the headmen at every step, instilling what I think right—separating the *abuses* from the customs." The government which he had displaced was so utterly bad that any change was certain to be accepted by the people with hope of improvement; and when it was found, that by the introduction of a wise system of taxation, which actually doubled the revenue, whilst to the popular mind it seemed to halve their burden—when, moreover, they found that justice was strictly and impartially administered in the courts—they welcomed the change with whole-hearted gratitude. The Rajah associated the native chiefs with himself in the government, and found them amenable to wholesome principles, and on the whole to be level-headed men. By this means mutual confidence was inspired, and the foundation laid of a government, the principle of which was and has ever since been "to rule for the people and with the people," to quote the Rajah writing twenty-two years later,

"and to teach them the rights of freemen under the restraints of government. The majority of the "Council"[1] secures a legal ascendency for native ideas of what is best for their happiness, here and hereafter. The wisdom of the white man cannot become a *hindrance*, and the English ruler must be their friend and guide, or nothing. The citizen of Sarawak has every privilege enjoyed by the citizen of England, and far more personal freedom than is known in a thickly populated country. They are *not* taught industry by being forced to work. They take a part in the government under which they live; they are consulted upon the taxes they pay; and, in short, they are free men.

"This is the government which has struck its roots into the soil for the last quarter of a century, which has triumphed over every danger and difficulty, and which has inspired its people with confidence."

The revenue of Sarawak was in utter confusion. Over large tracts of country no tax could be enforced, and the Rajah, as he had undertaken, was determined to lighten the load that had weighed so crushingly, and was inflicted so arbitrarily on the loyal Land-Dayaks—loyal hitherto, not in heart, but because powerless to resist. To carry on the government without funds was impossible, and the want of these was now, and for many years to come, the Rajah's greatest trouble. Consequently the antimony ore was made a monopoly of the government, which was a fair and just measure, and to the general advantage of the community, though it was subsequently seized upon as a pretext for accusing the Rajah of having debased his position by engaging in trade. But it was years before the revenue was sufficient to meet the expenditure, and gradually the Rajah sacrificed his entire fortune to pay the expenses of the administration.

In undertaking the government he had three objects in view:—

(1) The relief of the unfortunate Land-Dayaks from oppression.

[1] Established in 1855.

(2) The suppression of piracy, and the restoration to a peaceable and orderly life, of those tribes of Dayaks who had been converted into marauders by their Malay masters.

(3) The suppression of head-hunting.

But these ends could not be attained all at once. The first was the easiest arrived at, and the news spread through the length and breadth of the island that there was one spot on its surface where the native was not ground to powder, and where justice reigned. The result was that the Land-Dayaks flocked to it. Whole families came over from the Dutch Protectorate, where there was no protection; and others who had fled to the mountains and the jungle returned to the sites of their burnt villages.

How this has worked, on the same undeviating lines of a sound policy, under the rule of the two Rajahs, the following may show. Writing in 1867, on revisiting Sarawak, Admiral the Hon. Sir Henry Keppel said:

> It brought back to my mind some four-and-twenty years ago, when I first came up in the *Dido* with Sir James Brooke on board, and gave the first and nearly the only help he had in securing his position, thereby enabling him to carry out his philanthropic views for the benefit of a strange race. If he had not succeeded to the full extent of his then sanguine hopes, still there is no man living, or to come, who, single-handed, will have benefited his fellow-creatures to the extent Brooke has. In 1842, piracy, slavery, and head-hunting were the order of the day. The sail of a peaceful trader was nowhere to be seen, not even a fisherman, but along the length of this beautiful coast, far into the interior, the Malays and Dayaks warred on one another. Now how different! Huts and fishing stakes are to be seen all along the coast, the town of Kuching, which on the visit of the *Dido*, had scarcely 800 inhabitants, now has a population of 20,000. The aborigines, who called themselves warriors, are now peaceful traders and cultivators of rice. The jungle is fast being cleared to make way for farms.

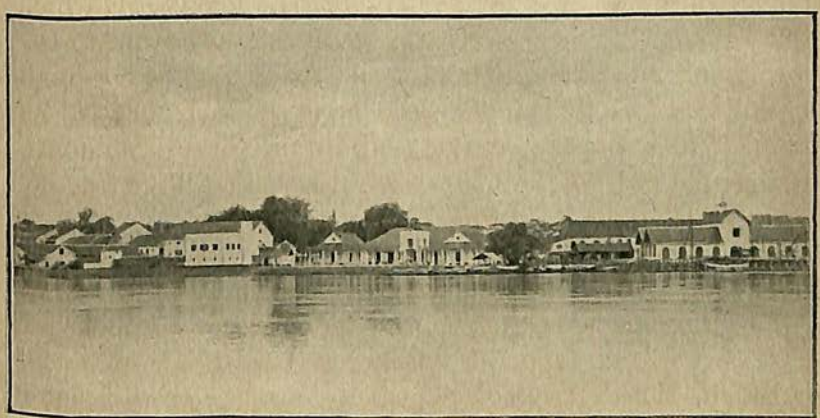
Head-hunting, the third aim which Rajah Brooke held before his eyes, was an ingrained custom of the race which could not be eradicated at once. The utmost that he could

effect at first was to prevent the taking of heads of any of the subjects under his rule. All the tribes that were in his raj were to be regarded as friends, and were therefore not to be molested. Any breach of the peace, every murder was severely punished. In a short time head-hunting and inter-tribal feuds amongst the Sarawak Dayaks were extirpated, and the raj ceased to be a hunting-field for the Sekrang and Saribas Dayaks; but they continued to haunt the coast together with the Lanun and Balenini pirates, and the suppression of piracy was the most serious undertaking of the three, and took many years to accomplish.

Early in 1843, the Rajah visited Singapore to further the interests of his raj, and for a change. His main wish, which he had repeatedly expressed, was to transfer Sarawak to the Crown, and he likewise impressed upon the Government the policy of establishing a settlement at Labuan, and of obtaining a monopoly of the coal in the Bruni Sultanate. He was able to interest the Chinese merchants in the trade of Sarawak. But the most important matter was the immediate suppression of the ravages committed by the pirates, both Dayak and Malay; and here Providence threw across his path, in the person of Captain the Hon. Henry Keppel,[1] the very assistance he required. Between the white Rajah and the Rajah Laut (Sea King), the title by which Keppel became known, and was ever afterwards remembered in Sarawak, a sincere attachment arose. Keppel was attracted by the Rajah's lovable personality, and sympathised with his objects; and, being chivalrous and always ready to act upon his own responsibility, he at once decided to lend all the support in his power, which any other naval officer might have hesitated to have done. The aid he so nobly rendered came at an opportune time, for it not only administered to the pirates a severe lesson, but also taught those inimical to his rule that the white Rajah was not held aloof by his own countrymen, and thus consolidated his power by reassuring the waverers and encouraging the loyal. The kindly and gallant Keppel stands foremost amongst the friends of Sarawak, to which State he rendered not only the splendid

[1] Afterwards Admiral of the Fleet. He died, January 1904.

services to be recorded in our next chapter, but ever evinced a keen and kindly interest in its welfare, and in its Rajahs, to whom he was ever ready to lend his able support and influence, and of whom the Rajah wrote, "He is my friend and the benefactor of Sarawak."



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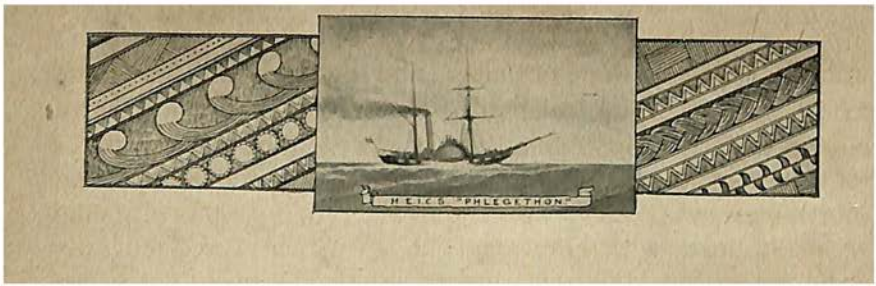
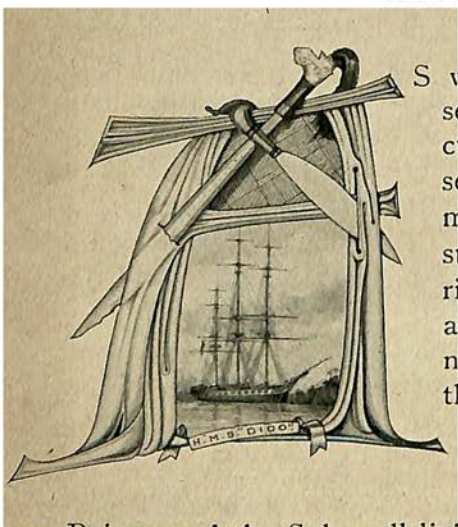


CHAPTER IV

THE PIRATES



As we have already mentioned, the second, and by far the most difficult, task that Rajah Brooke had set before him, and was determined to accomplish, was the suppression of piracy, which he rightly described as an evil almost as disgraceful to the European nations who permitted it as to the native States engaged in it. The principal piratical peoples at the time were the Illanun, or Lanun, the Balenini, the Bajaus, and the Sulus, all living to the north or north-east of Bruni, and consequently far beyond the jurisdiction of the Rajah. To these must be added the Sea-Dayaks of the Saribas and Sekrang, who, led by their Malay allies, though less formidable to trade, were far more destructive of human life.

The Sambas Malays had also been pirates, but at this period had ceased to be such. Earl, who visited Sambas in 1834, says, that "before the arrival of the Dutch Sambas was a nest of pirates. In 1812, having attacked an English vessel, several British men-of-war were sent from Batavia to attack the town. The inhabitants resisted, but were defeated, the fort was razed to the ground, and the guns tumbled into the river." The reoccupation by the Dutch shortly after-

wards of this place, Pontianak, and Banjermasin, put some check upon the piratical habits of the Malays in the western and southern States,[1] but the Malays of the eastern shores of Borneo, especially those of Koti, to the north and north-west, were all pirates; and even the people of Bruni were imbued with piratical habits, which were generally inherent in the Malay character, though they were not enterprising enough to be openly piratical, or to do more than encourage their bolder neighbours, from whom they could obtain plunder and slaves cheaply; and near Bruni, within the territory of the Sultan, were several piratical strongholds. All these were under the control of half-bred Arab sherips, as also were the Saribas and the Sekrangs.

The Lanuns are natives of the large island of Mindanau, or Magindanau, the southernmost of the Philippine group. They were known to the Spaniards as "Los Illanos de la laguna," and, in common with all Muhammadans, were classed by them as Moros or Moors. On the lagoon, or bay, of Lanun they live. They were the boldest and most courageous of the pirates, and the most dangerous to Europeans, whom they never hesitated to attack, not even the Dutch gunboats, and to whom, unlike the Balenini pirates, they would never give quarter, owing to a hatred, born of former injustice and inhumanity, received at the hands of those whom they could only have regarded as white barbarians. They became incorrigible and cruel pirates, looking upon piracy as a noble profession, though Dampier, who spent six months amongst them in 1686-7, and who was very hospitably treated, says nothing of piracy, and he gives a full and intelligent account of the island, its inhabitants, and products. He describes the "Hilanoons" as being a peaceable people, who bought foreign commodities with the product of their gold mines. The Spaniards had sometime before occupied the island, but the garrison had to be suddenly withdrawn to Manila, in consequence of a threatened invasion of that place by the Chinese. The Sultan then seized their

[1] The Governor-General of Netherlands East Indies in a rescript, dated January 23, 1846, acknowledged that the exertions during the past twenty-five years effectually to suppress piracy on the coasts of Borneo had not been successful for want of combination, and for having been limited to the western coast.

cannon, demolished their forts, and expelled their friars. Then it was the Dutch they feared; they wished the English to establish a Factory there,[1] and subsequently, in 1775, ceded a small island to the H.E.I. Company for that purpose.

Though the Spanish had a settlement on the western end of the island they were unable to keep the Lanun pirates in check, and on occasions were severely handled by them, as were also the Dutch.

With these pirates were associated the Bajaus or sea-gipsies, a roving people, who lived entirely in their prahus, with their women and children.

The vessels employed by Lanuns on marauding expeditions were sometimes of 60 tons burden, built very sharp in the prow and wide in beam, and over 90 feet in length. A double tier of oars was worked by slaves to the number of 100, and the fighting men would be from 30 to 40; the prahus of the smallest size carried from 50 to 80 in all. The bows of the vessels were solidly built, and fortified with hard wooden baulks capable of resisting a 6-pounder shot; often they were shod with iron. Here a narrow embrasure admitted a gun for a 6 to a 24-pound shot. In addition to this, the armaments consisted of several guns, usually of brass, of smaller calibre. Sometimes the piratical fleets comprised as many as 200 prahus, though the Lanuns usually cruised in small fleets of 20 to 30 sail. They would descend on a coast and attack any village, sack and burn it, kill the defenders, carry away men, women, and children as slaves, slaughter the cattle, and ravage the plantations. A cargo of slaves captured on the east coast of Borneo would be sold on the west coast, and those taken in the south would find a ready market in the north, in Sulu[2] and the Lanun country. Their cruising grounds were extensive—around the coasts of the Philippine islands, Borneo, and Celebes to Sumatra, Java, and the Malay peninsula, through the Moluccas to New Guinea, and even up the Bay of Bengal as far as Rangoon. In 1834, a fleet of these Lanuns swept round the coast of a

[1] *A Collection of Voyages*, 1729.

[2] Sulu was the principal market for the disposal of captives and plunder.

small island in the Straits of Rhio, opposite Singapore, and killed or carried away all the inhabitants.[1] In addition to their original home in the bay of Lanun, they had settlements in Marudu Bay in the north of Borneo, and towns along the west coast almost as far south as Ambong, and on the east coast to Tungku, and on to Koti. In Marudu their chief was Sherip Usman, who was married to a sister of the Sultan Muda of Sulu, and who was in league with Pangiran Usup, uncle to the Sultan of Bruni, and his principal adviser. Usman supplied the pirates with powder, shot, and guns, and they, on returning from a piratical expedition, paid him at the rate of four captives for every 100 rupees worth of goods with which he had furnished them. Such captives as had been taken in the vicinity of Bruni he would sell to Pangiran Usup for 100 rupees each, who would then demand of their friends and relations Rs. 200 for each. "Thus this vile Sherip, not reckoning the enormous price he charged for his goods in the first instance, gained 500 per cent for every slave, and the Pangiran Usup cleared 100 per cent by the flesh of his own countrymen."

In 1844, Ambong was a flourishing town occupied by an industrious and peaceable people, subjects of the Sultan of Bruni. In 1846, Captain Rodney Mundy, R.N., visited it, and the town was represented by a heap of ruins alone; the inhabitants had been slaughtered, or enslaved to be passed on to Usup, that he might make what he could out of them, by holding them to ransom by their relatives.

The Balenini were hand in glove with the Lanuns, and often associated with them in their expeditions. They issued from a group of islands in the Sulu sea, and acted in complicity with the Sultan of Sulu, whose country was the great nucleus of piracy. They equipped annually considerable fleets to prey upon the commerce with Singapore and the Straits; they also attacked villages, and carried off alike crews of vessels and villagers to slavery, to be crowded for months in the bottom of the pirate vessels, suffering

[1] A son of Captain Francis Light, who founded Penang in 1786, was named Lanoon, he having been born on the island at the time it was being blockaded by Lanun pirates.

indescribable miseries. Their cruising grounds were also very extensive; the whole circuit of Borneo was exposed to their attacks, except only the Lanun settlements, for hawks do not peck out hawk's een. When pursued and liable to be overtaken, they cut the throats of their captives and threw them overboard, men, women, and children alike. Up to 1848, the principal Balenini strongholds were in Balenini, Tongkil, and Basilan islands, but they were then driven out of the two former islands by the Spaniards, and they established themselves on other islands in the Sulu Archipelago; and Tawi Tawi island, which had always been one of their strongholds, then became their principal one.

Trade with Borneo and the Sulu Archipelago was rendered almost impossible, or at least a very dangerous pursuit, and even merchantmen using the Palawan passage to China, which takes them close along the coast of Borneo, often fell a prey to these pirates.

Earl, writing a year or two before the advent of the late Rajah to Sarawak, remarks in connection with Borneo, that it ought to be considered but "an act of justice to the natives of the Indian Archipelago, whom we have enticed to visit our settlement of Singapore, that some exertion should be made towards the suppression of piracy." He blames the unaccountable indifference and neglect which the British Government had hitherto displayed, and expresses his sympathy for the natives. He considered it his duty to point the way—it was left to the late Rajah to lead in it.

The Natuna, the Anamba, and the Tambilan islands, which stretch across the entrance of the China sea between Borneo and the Malay peninsula, were common lurking haunts of the pirates. Amongst these islands they could find water and shelter; could careen, clean, and repair their prahus; and they were right in the track of vessels bound to Singapore, or northward to the Philippines or China. To replenish their stores and to obtain arms and ammunition they would sail to Singapore in innocent-looking captured prahus, where they found a ready market for their booty amongst the Chinese. Muskets of English make and powder from English factories were found in captured prahus

and strongholds. At Patusan a number of barrels of fine gunpowder from Dartford were discovered exactly as these had left the factory in England.

Against these the Rajah was powerless to take the offensive. They had to be left to be reduced or cowed by the spasmodic efforts of British men-of-war. What he urged, though ineffectually, was that a man-of-war should patrol the coast and curb the ruffians. What was actually done, but not until later, was to attack and burn a stronghold or two, and then retire. The pirates fled into the jungle, but returned when the British were gone, rebuilt their houses, and supplied themselves with fresh vessels.

Near at hand were the Saribas and Sekrang Sea-Dayaks occupying the basins of rivers of these names, the Sekrang being an affluent of the Batang Lupar.

In each of these rivers was a large Malay community of some 1000 fighting men who lived by piracy, and who trained the numerous Dayaks, by whom they were surrounded, to the same lawless life that they led themselves, and guided them on their predatory excursions. Here again both Dayaks and Malays were under the influence of Sherips, Mular, his brother Sahap, and others. In course of time these Dayaks became expert seamen, and, accompanied by the Malays, yearly issued forth with fleets composed of a hundred or more bangkongs,[1] sweeping the seas and carrying desolation along the shores of Borneo over a distance of 800 miles.

The Sea-Dayaks soon became aware of their power; and accordingly, both in their internal government and on their piratical expeditions, their chiefs attained an authority superior to that of the Malay chiefs, their titular rulers.

In May, 1843, H.M.S. *Dido* started on her eventful cruise to Borneo, having the Rajah on board. After passing Sambas, Captain Keppel dispatched the pinnace and two cutters under the first lieutenant, with whom went the Rajah, to cruise along the coast. Lanun pirates were seen, but, easily outsailing the flotilla, escaped. Off Sirhasan, the largest of the group of the Natuna islands, whither the

[1] Dayak war-boats, some having as many as 75 to the crew.

boats had been directed to go, six prahus, some belonging to the Rajah Muda of Rhio (an island close to Singapore, belonging to the Dutch, and under a Dutch Resident), and some to the islanders, mistaking the *Dido's* boats for those of a shipwrecked vessel, and expecting an easy prey, advanced with boldness and opened fire upon them. They were quickly undeceived, and in a few minutes three out of the six prahus were captured, with a loss of over twelve killed and many wounded. Neither the Rhio Malays nor those of the islands were pirates, and the former under an envoy were collecting tribute for the Sultan of Lingin, but the temptation was irresistible to a people with piracy innate in their character. They protested it was a mistake, and that with the sun in their eyes they had mistaken the boats for Lanun pirates! The little English flotilla had suffered no casualties, and a severe lesson had been administered, which was rightly considered to be sufficient. The wounded were attended to, and, having been liberally supplied with fresh provisions, Lieutenant Wilmot Horton left for Sarawak to rejoin the *Dido*.

After having been cleverly dodged by three Lanun prahus, the *Dido* anchored off the Muaratebas entrance on May 13th, and proceeded up to Kuching on the 16th. Keppel described the Rajah's reception by his people as one of undisguised delight, mingled with gratitude and respect, on the return of their newly elected ruler to his country.

The temerity of the pirates had become so great that it was deemed advisable to despatch the little Sarawak gunboat, the *Jolly Bachelor*, under the charge of Lieutenant Hunt, with a crew of eighteen marines and seamen, to cruise in the vicinity of Cape Datu, and there to await the arrival of a small yacht which was expected from Singapore with the mails, and to escort her to Kuching. Two or three days after they had left, at about 3 o'clock one morning, writes Captain Keppel:—

> The moon being just about to rise, Lieutenant Hunt, happening to awake, observed a savage brandishing a kris, and performing his war-dance on the bit of deck in an ecstasy of delight, thinking in all probability of the ease with which he had got possession of a fine

trading boat, and calculating the cargo of slaves he had to sell, but little dreaming of the hornets' nest into which he had fallen. Lieutenant Hunt's round face meeting the light of the rising moon, without a turban surmounting it, was the first notice the pirate had of his mistake. He immediately plunged overboard; and before Lieutenant Hunt had sufficiently recovered his astonishment, to know whether he was dreaming or not, or to rouse his crew up, a discharge from three or four cannons within a few yards, and the cutting through the rigging by the various missiles with which the guns were loaded, soon convinced him there was no mistake. It was as well the men were still lying down when this discharge took place, as not one of them was hurt; but on jumping to their legs, they found themselves closely pressed by two large war-prahus, one on each bow. To return the fire, cut the cable, man the oars, and back astern to gain room, was the work of a minute; but now came the tug-of-war, it was a case of life and death. Our men fought as British sailors ought to do; quarter was not expected on either side; and the quick and deadly aim of the marines prevented the pirates from reloading their guns. The strong bulwarks or barricades, grape-shot proof, across the fore part of the Lanun prahus, through which ports are formed for working the guns, had to be cut away by round shot before the muskets could bear effectually. This done the grape and cannister told with fearful execution. In the meantime, the prahus had been pressing forward to board while the *Jolly Bachelor* backed astern; but as soon as this service was achieved, our men dropped their oars, and seizing their muskets dashed on: the work was sharp but short, and the slaughter great. While one pirate boat was sinking, and an effort made to secure her, the other effected her escape by rounding the point of rocks where a third and larger prahu, hitherto unseen, came to her assistance, and putting fresh hands on board and taking her in tow, succeeded in getting off, although chased by the *Jolly Bachelor*, after setting fire to the crippled prize, which blew up and sank.[1]

None of the crew of this prahu survived, and so few in the second prahu, that, when she separated from her consort, the slaves arose and put them to death. They were the same three prahus that had eluded the *Dido*.

Having satisfied himself as to the character of the Saribas and Sekrang Dayaks, and how the chiefs governing them encouraged their depredations, and having received an appeal from the Rajah Muda Hasim[2] to relieve the cost of the perils

[1] *Expedition to Borneo of H.M.S. Dido*, 1847.

[2] On behalf of the Sultan, Saribas and Sekrang being beyond Rajah Brooke's jurisdiction.

it underwent, Captain Keppel resolved to attack the Saribas first, as being the most formidable of the two piratical hordes.

Preparations for the expedition were soon commenced. It was to consist of a native force of 300 Malays, the *Dido's* three large boats, and the *Jolly Bachelor*, manned by blue-jackets and marines, all under the command of Lieutenant Wilmot Horton. The datus were opposed to the Rajah going—they thought the risk too great, but on his expressing his determination to do so, and leaving it to them to accompany him or not, their simple reply was, "What is the use of our remaining? If you die, we die; and if you live, we live; we will go with you."[1] The Rajah and Captain Keppel accompanied the expedition in the *Dido's* gig.

Intelligence of the design was carried far and wide. The Saribas strengthened their defences, and several of the half-bred Arab sherips living nearer Sarawak sent in promises of good conduct. Tribes that had suffered from the depredations of the pirates offered to join in attacking them, and the force thus augmented by several hundreds of Dayaks started early in June.

The first skirmish fell to the lot of Datu Patinggi Ali, who, having been sent on ahead, met a force of seven prahus at the mouth of the Saribas, which he attacked and drove back, after capturing one. Padi, a stockaded town some 60 miles up the Saribas river, and the furthest up of the piratical strongholds, reputed also to be the strongest and most important, was the first attacked, and though defended by two forts and two booms of forest trees stretched across the river, and being crowded with Malay and Dayak warriors, it was carried on the evening of June 11, and the place committed to the flames. The next day some 800 Balau Dayaks,[2] under Sherip Japar of Lingga, joined the force, keen to make reprisals for past injuries.

The enemy, reckoned at about 6000 Dayaks and 500 Malays, had retired up-river, and against them a small force of about 40 blue-jackets and the same number of Malays,

[1] Keppel, *op. cit.*

[2] These Sea-Dayaks, together with those of the Undup, also an affluent of the Batang Lupar, subsequently became the mainstay of the Government against the Saribas and Sekrangs.

under the Rajah and Lieutenant Horton, started the next day. During the night they were repeatedly attacked by the pirates, who, under cover of the darkness, closed in on their assailants, especially where some marines held a post on a cleared height overlooking the river. The pirates lost a good many men, and the next morning, seeing the force again preparing to advance, sent in a flag of truce and sued for mercy. The Rajah then met their chiefs and explained to them that it was in consequence of their acts of piracy that they were now punished; that they had been cautioned two years previously to abstain from these marauding expeditions, and that they had disregarded this monition; he assured them that they would be unmolested if they abstained from molesting others, but that if they continued to prey on their neighbours and to interfere with trading vessels they would receive further castigation.

It was proposed to these people that the towns of Paku and Rembas should be spared, if they would guarantee the future good conduct of the inhabitants. They coolly replied that those people deserved the same punishment, which had better be administered, otherwise they would continue pirating, and would lead the Padi people astray again.

Paku was taken on the 14th, and burnt; here no resistance was met with. The next day the chiefs submitted. On the 17th, Rembas was attacked and taken, the Balau Dayaks, under Sherip Japar, having all the fighting to do. This was the largest and strongest town, and much plunder was secured. After receiving the submission of the Rembas chiefs the expedition returned to Kuching, having, in seven days, destroyed the strongholds of the most powerful and dreaded pirates on the north-west coast of Borneo, who for years had defied both Bruni and Sarawak. Such an impression was produced, that the Sekrangs sent messages promising to abstain from piracy, and offering, if they were spared, to give up a hundred women and children captives; and Sherips Mular and Sahap, fearing the punishment they so richly deserved, sent professions of future good conduct. These were not accepted, but the day of reckoning had to be deferred, for Keppel had received orders to return to China.

The Saribas had suffered, but not the redoubtable Sekrangs, and the former not so severely but that in a couple of years all their losses could be repaired, their stockades be rebuilt, and fresh prahus constructed, and the old story of blood and rapine continued with little intermission, not only by them, but by the Lanuns and Sekrangs as well.

A year was to elapse before Keppel's return; and we will now record in their sequence the few events of interest that happened during this short period.

About a month after the departure of the *Dido*, the *Samarang*, Captain Sir Edward Belcher, arrived at Kuching. Sir Edward had been sent, consequent on Rajah Brooke's actions and recommendations, to inquire personally into and report officially upon the affairs and capabilities of north-west Borneo. As Sir Spenser St. John writes—[1]

> This visit was as useless as such visits usually are. What can the most acute naval officer understand of a country during a few days' or weeks' visit? He can describe more or less accurately its outward appearance; but to understand its internal politics is not possible in the time. And yet on such comparatively valueless reports the British Government relies in a majority of cases. Mr. Brooke suffered more than any other pioneer of civilisation from the system.

"On getting under way to proceed to Bruni the *Samarang* grounded on a rocky ledge off the town, and Sir Edward's brief visit was protracted by a fortnight. The ship, which lay in an extremely critical position, was righted and got off the rocks before the *Harlequin*, *Wanderer*, *Vixen*, and *Diana* arrived to assist her. Accompanied by the Rajah, Sir Edward proceeded to Bruni towards the end of August, but the latter's visit was very short; he saw the Sultan for two hours only, and then, as small-pox was raging in Bruni, departed for Singapore.[2] The principal object of the Rajah's visit was obtained, as he was enabled to bear

[1] *Life of Sir James Brooke*, p. 84.

[2] Sir Edward's report upon Sarawak appears to have been favourable; he pronounced the coal at Bruni, which he never examined, to be unworkable, and the Sultan to be a savage.

away a deed granting Sarawak in perpetuity to him and to the heirs of his appointment.

In December the Rajah left for Singapore, and there the next month he received the news of his mother's death. To quote the Rajah, after the first shock, he resolved to seek in activity a relief from the lowness of spirits which he suffered. This led him to join an expedition to punish certain pirates on the coast of Sumatra for injuries done to British ships. The ships employed were the *Harlequin*, Captain the Hon. G. Hastings; the *Wanderer*, Captain Seymour, with whom the Rajah sailed, and the East India Company's steamer, the *Diana*. At Achin[1] they found the once powerful Sultan unable to control or punish his own subjects, and the ships then proceeded to Batu and Murdu, the strongholds of the pirates. The former town was burnt without offering much resistance, but the latter gave them a tough fight of five hours before it was taken. The pirates lost from fifty to seventy men killed and wounded, the English two killed, and about a dozen wounded, amongst whom was the Rajah, who was shot inside the right arm, and had an eyebrow cut in two by a spear. This was on February 12, 1844.

In Singapore the Rajah purchased a new vessel, the *Julia*, having sold the *Royalist*; the *Julia* was fitted as a gunboat. Early in June he returned to Sarawak in the *Harlequin*.

He found that during his absence, his old enemy, Sherip Sahap, had built many war-boats, and had made great preparations for offensive operations. Kuching was supposed to be his object, and it had been put in a state of defence, but on the Rajah's return Sahap deemed it advisable to retire to the Batang Lupar, and taking with him a large force marked his course with bloodshed and rapine. He then fortified himself at Patusan, below the Sekrang, and the Dayaks were sent out ravaging in every direction. Eight villages were burnt in the Sadong, the Samarahan people were attacked, and many women and children were captured. A party even ventured into Sarawak, and cut off two

[1] Pronounced by the natives *Achi*.

Singgi Dayaks on their farm, but they did not get off scot free, for the Rajah, starting in the middle of the night, intercepted their return and gave them a sharp lesson.

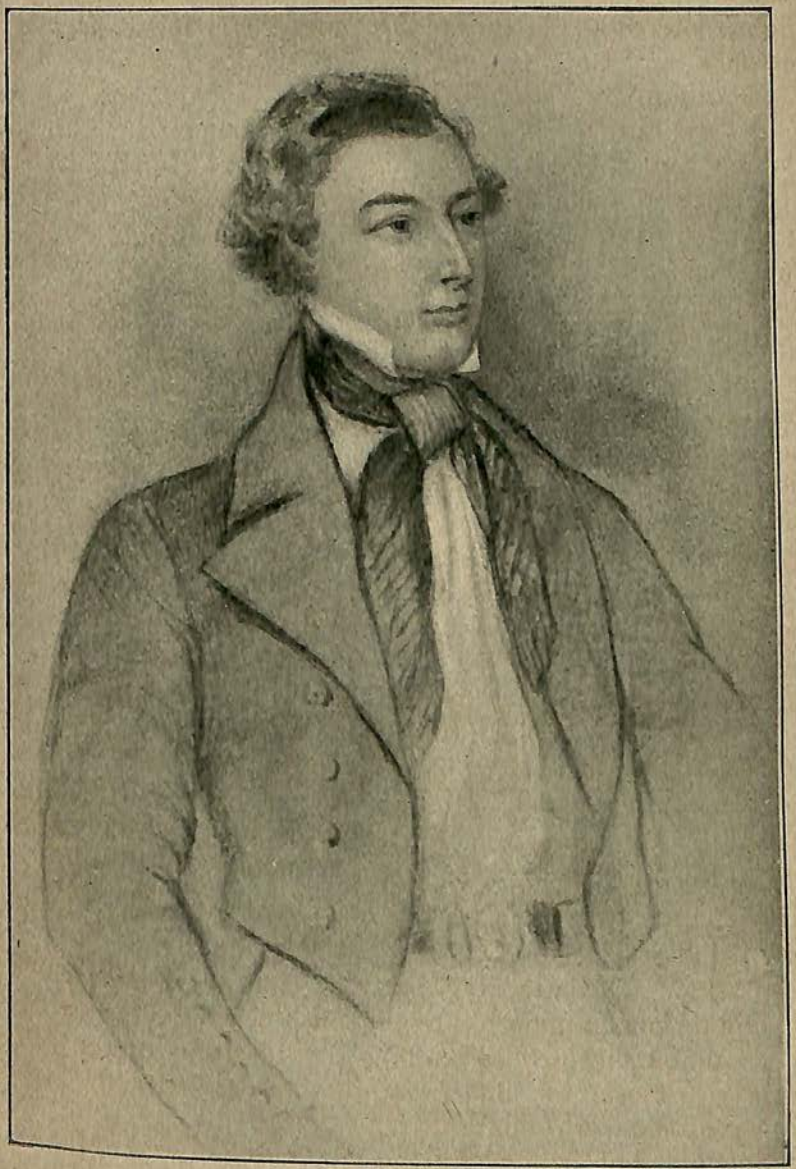
Patusan,[1] the stronghold of Sherip Sahap, with whom was Pangiran Makota, was on the left-hand bank of the Batang Lupar, about fifteen miles below the Undup stream, up which, about seven miles from the mouth, was the stockaded town of Sahap's brother, Sherip Mular. Besides numerous Malays, these sherips were supported by the Sekrang Dayaks, then estimated to number some 10,000 fighting men, and these warriors, though they might not recognise the power of the sherips over them in other matters, were always ready to respond to a summons to engage in a plundering raid.

Captain Keppel had been long expected, but the *Dido* had been detained in India, and when she arrived on July 30, with the welcome addition of the H.E.I.C's steamer *Phlegethon*, preparations for the coming expedition against the Batang Lupar were so well forward that it was enabled to start almost immediately. On board the *Dido* was the Rajah's favourite nephew, midshipman Charles Johnson, who eight years later became the Tuan Muda of Sarawak, and who ultimately succeeded his uncle as Rajah.

The combined force of blue-jackets, Malays, and Dayaks, headed by the *Phlegethon*, started from Kuching on August 5th, and on the 7th were off Patusan. This place was well fortified, sixty-four brass besides many iron guns were taken there,[2] and its five forts were captured, with heavy loss to the pirates. The attacking party lost only one man killed, the captain of the main-top of the *Dido*, who was cut in two by a cannon-shot whilst loading the bow-gun of the *Jolly Bachelor*; close to him was the present Rajah, who fortunately escaped unhurt.

So confident had Sherip Sahap and Pangiran Makota been in the impregnability of their strongholds that they had not taken the usual precaution of sending their women,

[1] More correctly Putusan, or Pemutus. We retain the old spelling.
[2] These guns realised £900 at public auction in Singapore.



THE PRESENT RAJAH AS A MIDSHIPMAN.

children, and property of value, to a distant place of refuge. On their flight the unfortunate children were placed in different nooks and corners.

After having completely destroyed the town of Patusan, and Makota's town about a mile above, the expedition moved on upon the 10th. The *Phlegethon* was taken up as far as the Sekrang, a very bold proceeding considering the dangerous nature of the river, and the force was divided into three divisions, to ascend the Undup, the Sekrang, and the main-river; but the pirates, chiefly Malays, offered such a stubborn resistance in the Undup that these divisions had to be reunited to make a simultaneous attack. The gallant Datu Patinggi Ali here distinguished himself in a hand-to-hand fight with the enemy; it was witnessed by the blue-jackets, who hailed him with three hearty British cheers on his return. It took the force the whole day to cut through the heavy log barriers that had been placed across the river below Mular's town, which the enemy deserted during the night, retiring to a Dayak village some twenty-five miles farther up the river. After an arduous journey of two days the landing-place of the village was reached; here occurred a brush with the pirates, who were pushed back, and old Datu Patinggi nearly covered himself with glory by almost capturing Sherip Mular, who saved himself by ignominiously jumping into the river and swimming ashore. A little later, Captain Keppel and Lieutenant Wade with some seven men surprised a large force of pirates waiting behind a point; these were so taken by surprise that they were easily routed, but Lieutenant Wade rushing on in pursuit was struck by two rifle-shots, and fell at his commander's feet mortally wounded. The Dayak village was then attacked, and the enemy scattered.

On the 15th, the *Phlegethon* was reached, and on the 17th, a force started up the Sekrang to administer a lesson to the notorious Dayak pirates of that river, who had been making their presence felt in an unpleasant manner, continuously annoying the force at night time by hanging about on the river banks and killing and wounding several of the Malay and Dayak members of the force. The expedition

consisted of seven of the *Dido's* and *Phlegethon's* boats, and the *Jolly Bachelor*, with a division of a few light native boats under Datu Patinggi Ali as a vanguard, and the rest of the Sarawak contingent behind as a reserve. On the 19th, the enemy made a determined stand, blocking the advance of Patinggi Ali's division with a formidable array of war-boats, and with thousands of men on each bank, who had selected positions where they could effectively use their javelins and blow-pipes. Instead of falling back upon the main body, old Ali bravely dashed on, followed by his little contingent. A desperate encounter against fearful odds ensued, and before the ships' boats could come to his support the fine old Malay chief[1] had fallen along with a Mr. Steward,[2] and twenty-nine of his devoted followers, fifty-six more being wounded. The gun and rocket fire of the boats soon turned the tables, and the Dayaks retreated from their position with considerable loss. The same day their town was destroyed, and the expedition returned. At Patusan, which was reached on the 22nd, Captain Sir Edward Belcher, with the boats of the *Samarang*, joined them, but too late to render any service. At Kuching there was barely time to get the sick and wounded into comfortable quarters before news arrived that Sherip Sahap had joined Sherip Japar at Lingga, and was again collecting his followers. With the addition of the *Samarang's* boats, the force immediately started for Lingga; Sherip Sahap hastily retired, and, though closely pursued, escaped over the border; Sherip Japar was deposed from his governorship of Lingga; and Pangiran Makota was captured and sent a prisoner on

[1] The Patinggi was always ready and ever to the fore where tough work and hard knocks were going, and he was the guiding and leading spirit in such expeditions as was this. "Three fingered Jack" the *Dido's* crew had dubbed him, having that strong regard for him that brave men bear towards another though his skin be of a different complexion—for he had lost two fingers in a former encounter. The type has since changed, and the courtly, intrepid, and determined fighting Malay chief has gone—and he is missed. "I sigh for some of the old hands that could not read or write, but *could* work, and had more sound wisdom in their little fingers than many popinjay gentlemen of the present day carry in their heads," so wrote the present Rajah ten years ago.

[2] Mr. George Steward, formerly of the H.E.I.C's maritime service, had been sent out by the Rajah's agent, Mr. Wise, on a trading venture. He joined the expedition as a volunteer, and had concealed itself in Patinggi Ali's boat, where he should not have been.

board the *Phlegethon*. The Rajah then held a meeting of all the Malay chiefs of the surrounding country, and in an eloquent speech impressed upon them the determination of the British Government to suppress piracy; dwelt upon the blessings arising from peace and trade, and concluded by saying that the measures lately adopted against piracy were taken for the protection of all the peaceful communities along the coast. "So great was the attention bestowed during the delivery of his speech that the dropping of a pin might have been heard."[1] On September 4th, the force again reached Kuching.

Sherip Sahap, after residing for a short time in the Kapuas, in Dutch Borneo, died of a broken heart at Pontianak. Sherip Mular, who also escaped over the border, subsequently sued for forgiveness, but this was then refused.[2] Sherip Japar, who the previous year had rendered good service against the Saribas pirates, was removed to Ensingai in the Sadong. Pangiran Makota, who so richly deserved death, and who as a matter of policy alone, as well as in the interests of humanity, should have been executed, was spared by the Rajah, and allowed to retire to Bruni, with what results we have already noted.

Early the next year the Saribas and Sekrang Dayaks visited the Rajah at Kuching and formally tendered their submission. The promises then made of future good behaviour would probably have been observed, and those, of which there was now a large party, in favour of peace have been upheld, had the British Government afforded the Rajah continuous support for a short time, even in the shape of a small brig-of-war. "We must progress or retrograde" was the Rajah's timely, though unheeded warning. But the desired support was denied, and gradually the piratical party again became dominant, and in less than two years found themselves in a position once more to defy the Rajah, and to spread terror along the coast. But with this,

[1] Keppel, *op. cit.* We have taken our account of the expedition up the Batang Lupar mainly from Keppel's narrative, the only original history of these operations hitherto published.

[2] He was afterwards pardoned and permitted to reside at Sekrang town, where he died.

and their final, though tardy punishment, we shall deal later.

The Rajah seeing how precarious his position was, had offered the cession of Sarawak to the British Crown without remuneration, though he had now laid out £10,000 upon its development. He showed how by developing the trade and the natural wealth of the land through British influence, river after river might be opened up to commerce. He entreated that steady and unremitting efforts should be made for the suppression of piracy. But the Government shrank from the extension of its Colonies, it was afraid of being dragged into a second New Zealand scheme, and it consented, reluctantly, to afford him help, and that but inadequate, against the pirates.

"It is easy," wrote the Rajah at the close of the previous year, "for men to perform fine feats with the pen; it is easy for the rich man to give yearly thousands in charity; it is easy to preach against the slave trade, or to roar against piracy; it is easy to bustle about London, and get up associations for all kinds of objects—all this is easy, but it is not easy to stand alone—to be exiled—to lay out a small fortune—to expend life and health and money—to risk life itself, when the loss would be without glory and without gain. . . . I am enabled to dispense happiness and peace to many thousand persons. I stand alone; I appeal for assistance and gain none; I have struggled for four years bearing my life in my hand. I hold a commanding position and influence over the natives; I feel it my paramount duty to gain protection and some power. I state it in so many plain words, and if, after all, I am left to my own resources the fault of failure is not with me. This negotiation with Government is nearly at an end, or if protracted, if I perceive any intention of delay, or any coolness, I will myself break it off and trust to God and my own wits. . . If they act cordially they will either give me a plain negative or some power to act, in order that I may carry out my views. If they haggle and bargain any further I will none of them, or if they bother me with their suspicions, or send any more gentlemen for the purpose of espionage, I will assert the independence I feel, and send them all to the devil.

This, it must be remembered, was in a private letter. His position was precarious. He, with less than half-a-dozen Englishmen, had established himself as reigning prince over Sarawak; its population consisted mainly of timid

Land-Dayaks, useless in warfare, and there were only a few hundred Malays and Sea-Dayaks upon whom he could rely to protect the little State against its powerful and actively hostile neighbours. Even his own people were in a condition of tension and hesitation, not knowing whether the arm of England would be extended in his support, or be withdrawn, leaving him to succumb under the krises of assassins.

It is perhaps as well that the British Government did leave the Rajah so much alone; that he was able to exercise a free hand to carry out his own ideas, and that he was not crossed or hampered by the changing policies of the different Cabinets that came into power—some ready to extend the limits of the Empire, others shrinking from responsibilities, and seeking to contract the sphere of British influence within the narrowest limits, but all timid and nervous of opposition from the adverse party. The little State has thus had the advantage of having been governed for just seventy years *directly* by two of the ablest rulers of Orientals, having an intimate knowledge of their subjects and their requirements, and governing with their people, instead of having been subject to the capricious and often stupid government of the Colonial Office, and of ever-changing governors. Unfortunately the late Rajah was subsequently "crossed and hampered" from home, notably by the little England party at whose head stood Mr. Gladstone, and the greatest evil was done to Sarawak by his own countrymen supported by a timorous Government. Happily, the English rajahs, the second as well as the first, by their honesty of purpose and their inflexibility of resolution gathered about them a host of native adherents; these they inspired with self-respect, and confidence in their rulers, and thus formed a mass of public opinion that went far towards making their rule permanent, and enabled it to withstand checks from within and from without.

The Dutch at this time had been making praiseworthy efforts to check the Lanuns; they had destroyed several piratical fleets, and were preparing on a large scale to drive them off the seas; in this, however, they failed.

For some time the Rajah was free from his troublesome neighbours, and he devoted his time to the affairs of

his little State, the population of which had just received an addition of 5000 families of Malays from the disturbed districts along the coast.

Not till Hasim and his train of obstructive and rapacious hangers-on had departed from Sarawak could the benefits of the Rajah's administration take complete effect. So long as these men remained, with their traditions of misrule, and their distorted ideas of the relation between the governor and the governed, a thousand difficulties were interposed, thwarting the Rajah's efforts, and these had to be circumvented or overcome. The pangirans, great and small, great in their self-confidence, proud of the mischief they had wrought, small and mean in their selfish aims, viewed the introduction of reform with ill-disguised hostility; and the Rajah Muda Hasim in their midst formed a nucleus about whom disaffection and intrigue must inevitably gather and grow to a head. Only Bedrudin was heart and soul with the Rajah, so far as his lights went. He was a man of intelligence and generous spirit, who had taken the lesson to heart that by good government, the encouragement of commerce and the peaceful arts, the country would thrive and the revenue in consequence largely increase, and that his brother pangirans were blindly and stupidly killing the goose that laid golden eggs. To him the Rajah was sincerely attached, and the attachment was reciprocated. Personally, the Rajah was sorry when Bedrudin had to return with his brothers to Bruni; but the Sultan's recall was imperative, and it obviated all risk of the prince being made, unwillingly, a gathering point of faction. It was advisable, moreover, that there should be near the Sultan's ear a man like Bedrudin, who would give wise counsel; and Hasim, weak and vacillating as he was, could show his nephew by his own experience that advantage would accrue to him by adopting a policy favourable to British enterprise, and by warning him that disaster, though approaching with lagging feet, must overtake him inevitably if he attempted to thwart it. Furthermore, the Sultan had been loud in his professions of affection for his dear absent uncles, and of his desire to have them about his person.

Early in October, H.M.S. *Samarang*, Captain Sir Edward

Belcher, and the H.E.I.C's steamer *Phlegethon*, arrived to convey to Bruni, Rajah Muda Hasim, his brothers, and their numerous families, retainers, slaves, and hangers-on. The Rajah himself went up in the *Samarang*. On approaching Bruni there were signs of hostility from four forts on Pulo Cheremin, which Pangiran Usup had frightened the Sultan into building, but the flag of Hasim reassured the Brunis. The exiles were well received. The Sultan declared he would listen to no other adviser than Hasim, and the people were in favour of him. Though Pangiran Usup had gained great influence over the Sultan he deemed it prudent to dissemble, and declared himself ready implicitly to obey Hasim, and as a proof of good faith at once dismantled the new forts on Hasim ordering him to do so. The poorer classes, who had heard of the peace and security enjoyed by the inhabitants of Sarawak, openly expressed their desire that the Rajah should remain and govern conjointly with Pangiran Muda Hasim. Labuan island, which the Sultan now offered the Rajah, was examined, and the Rajah considered it superior to Kuching for a settlement, as being in a more central and more commanding position.[1]

In February, 1845, Captain Bethune of H.M.S. *Driver*, anchored in the Sarawak river, and brought a despatch from Lord Aberdeen appointing the Rajah confidential agent in Borneo to her Majesty, an appointment made mainly upon the Rajah's own suggestion that official recognition would go far to help him. He at once proceeded to Bruni in the *Driver*, bearing a letter from the Foreign Office to the Sultan in reply to his letters requesting assistance to suppress piracy; and Captain Bethune had been directed to select a suitable locality on the N.W. coast for the formation of a British settlement, whence the sea along the north and west coasts might be watched, and where there was coal suitable for a coaling station.

The letter was received by the Sultan and his pangirans with due honours, and the Rajah told them that he "was deputed by her Majesty the Queen to express her feelings

[1] Labuan, however, proved a failure as a trading centre, and in that respect has taken a very secondary position to Kuching.

of goodwill, and to offer every assistance in repressing piracy in these seas." The Sultan stared. Muda Hasim said, "We are greatly indebted; it is good, very good."[1] And the Sultan had reason to stare. Pangiran Usup, who was also present, was no doubt likewise too much taken aback to do anything else, ready as he was with his tongue, for such a proffer was as unexpected as it was unwelcome. Hitherto they had imagined, and with some reason, that owing to its slowness and inaction, the British Government was lukewarm in its intentions to suppress piracy; that outward professions would not be taken seriously, and were all that was needed of them to cover their secret encouragement of their piratical neighbours. The Sultan, however, was a clever dissembler; he joined with Hasim in expressing a hope that with the Rajah's assistance the government of Bruni might be settled, piracy suppressed, and trade fostered.

The Rajah then went to Singapore to meet the Admiral, Sir Thomas Cochrane, and to endeavour to interest him in Bornean affairs, to gain his assistance against the pirates, and in support of the party in Bruni that was in favour of reform. He was successful as the sequel will show, and in May returned to Bruni in the *Phlegethon*. He then discovered to his no little concern that the Princes Hasim and Bedrudin were in such danger that their brothers begged to be allowed to return to Sarawak. They were exposed to the intrigues of Pangiran Usup, who had not only poisoned the mind of the Sultan against his uncles of legitimate blood, but who was also bitterly hostile to English interference with piracy, which was the main source of his revenue. The imbecile Sultan, vicious at heart, and himself a participator in the spoils of piracy, was of too contracted a mind to be able to conceive the advantages that could be obtained were his capital converted from a nest of brigands and slaves into an emporium of commerce; and he was totally indifferent to the welfare of the greater portion of his subjects, who being pagans, were created by Allah to be preyed upon by the true believers.[2]

[1] Journals, Keppel, *op. cit.*

[2] The pirates and their supporters, however, preyed upon Islams as well as infidels, and religion was a dead letter to them in this respect. Quite contrary to the tenets of their faith, true believers who were captured were sold into slavery.

He was accordingly induced to listen to Usup, of whom he was really frightened, and to mistrust Hasim and Bedrudin. To add to Hasim's troubles, the pirate chief of Marudu, Sherip Usman, had sent a defiant message threatening to attack him for favouring the English. If unsupported, the Rajah foresaw that Hasim would be dragged into a civil war which might end in his downfall. His life was in peril owing to his leaning towards the British Government, and the Rajah was determined to uphold him; if necessary, by bringing a force from Sarawak to carry Bruni. If too late to save him and Bedrudin, he resolved to burn Bruni from end to end, and take care it should remain afterwards in desolation.

The Rajah again proceeded to Singapore, and sufficiently interested the Admiral in Bruni affairs to induce him to call at that place with his squadron on his way to China. A fresh outrage by Sherip Usman in plundering and burning a brig decided the Admiral to take measures against him, and by his detention in slavery of two British subjects Pangiran Usup himself gave sufficient cause to call for punishment; these captives he had placed in confinement whenever a man-of-war appeared.

On August 9, Sir Thomas Cochrane had an interview with the Sultan, and the following morning called upon him for the restoration of the captives held by Usup, and for his punishment. The Sultan replied that Usup refused obedience to him, and that he was powerless to enforce it, and, as the offence was committed against the British, he requested the Admiral himself to take Usup in hand. Though the Admiral had brought a line-of-battle ship, two frigates, two brigs, and three steamers, Usup, "strong in the idea of his strength," was foolhardy enough to defy him, and prepare for resistance. A shot was fired over his house from the *Vixen*, which was replied to by the guns of his fortified house, thereupon the steamer poured in a broadside and knocked the house to shivers. Usup fled with the few retainers he had with him—he had taken the precaution to send away his women and treasure the day before. We will return to him shortly.

The fleet then sailed to call Sherip Usman to account.

His stronghold in Marudu Bay was attacked by a force of 550 men in twenty-four boats, and after a stout resistance was taken with a loss of some twenty killed and wounded. Amongst the former was Lieutenant Gibbard, and near him, when he fell, was the present Rajah, then a midshipman on the *Wolverine*. The pirates suffered heavily. Many sherips and chiefs were killed, and Sherip Usman was himself mortally wounded—he was carried away to die in the jungle. As in the Batang Lupar the year previously, several proofs of piracies committed upon European vessels here came to light in the shape of articles taken from ships; and such articles would probably have been more numerous had there not been a market in Singapore for the more valuable commodities.

The Rajah now returned to Sarawak in the *Cruiser*, visiting Bruni on his way. Here he learnt that two days after he had left the town, Pangiran Usup, full of rage and resentment, had gathered a force to attack Bruni and take and kill Pangiran Muda Hasim, and his brother Pangiran Bedrudin, but the latter met him, inflicted on him a signal defeat, and Usup was constrained to fly to Kimanis, some seventy-five miles to the north-east of the capital, over which district he was feudary lord. Then the two uncles insisted upon their nephew the Sultan issuing a decree for his execution. This was done, and the order transmitted to the headman at Kimanis. It was carried out by him with characteristic perfidy. Pretending to entertain a lively friendship for the refugee, he seized an opportunity, when Usup had laid aside his weapons in order to bathe, to fall upon him and strangle him. His brother, Pangiran Yakub, was executed at the same time.

At the close of 1845, Sarawak was at peace within and without. Trade was flourishing, and by immigration the population had increased fourfold, and what had been but a few years before a most miserably oppressed country was now the happiest and most prosperous in Borneo.

The Rajah felt more secure, but he still wished for a man-of-war to guard the coast, and, above all, for British protection, and a flag with the Union cantoned in it.

In October, Sherip Mular, with Sherip Ahmit,[1] was again amongst the Sekrang Dayaks, and had induced them to go on a piratical expedition with Sherips Amal, Long, and their father Sherip Abu Bakar, but this rising the Rajah was easily able to suppress with his own Malays aided by the Balau Dayaks. The marauders were met and defeated by the Balaus, who captured their eighteen boats, arms and ammunition, and slew the Sekrang Dayak chief, Apai Beragai, but the three sherips unfortunately escaped into the jungle, and fled to Saribas. Timely warning of Sherip Mular's conduct had been sent the Rajah by the well-disposed Malay and Dayak chiefs of the Sekrang, of whom there were now many. But the sherips returned, and again gaining confidence and ascendency over the well disposed, in February, 1846, the Sekrang Dayaks once more burst out, and with a force of some 1200 men laid waste the coast, burning villages, killing men, and carrying women and children into slavery. They had fortified themselves up the Sekrang, and felt themselves to be in a position to repel the attack of any force that might be sent against them.

In the Sadong, on the Rajah's recommendation, a Malay chief named Abang Kasim had been appointed governor by the Bruni Government in succession to Sherip Sahap, with the title of Datu Bandar;[2] he was a man weak in character, but with brains enough to be mischievous and get himself into trouble; and the Land-Dayaks there were again being so oppressed by the Malays that the Rajah found it necessary to warn the latter that they would be punished and turned out of the river if they did not desist.

The Sea-Dayaks of the Kanowit river, a large affluent of the Rejang running towards the head of the Sekrang, by reason of their raids on the Melanaus of Muka, Oya, Matu, and the Rejang delta, now came under the Rajah's notice. The Datu Patinggi Abdul Rahman,[3] who was the nominal

[1] The son of Sherip Japar. S. Japar died the following year.

[2] He was married to a niece of Datu Patinggi Gapur.

[3] His son Haji Usup joined the Government service in 1862, and was afterwards appointed Datu Bandar in the Rejang. He died April 1st, 1905, after having served the Government faithfully and with distinction for over forty years. As a magistrate he bore a high reputation.

Bruni governor of this large river, had sent letters to the Rajah stating his desire to put down piracy; these were accepted as an expression of good faith, though he was suspected of conniving in these raids, and the Rajah promised him assistance. The Kanowit Dayaks were from the Sekrang, and were joined in their expeditions by the Saribas and Sekrang Dayaks, who marched overland to join them, so as to obtain a safer outlet to the sea than was now afforded by the mouths of their own rivers. They had lately destroyed Palo, in the delta, killed the men, and had carried the women and children into captivity.

After the death of Pangiran Usup it might have been supposed that the Sultan, feeble and irresolute, would have fallen under the influence of his uncles, Hasim and Bedrudin, and would have been led to favour the English alliance, but this was not so. He was angry at the rout of the pirates of Marudu, and sore at being constrained to sign the death warrant of Usup, his favourite and adviser; as also at the shrinkage of the profits derived from the pirates, though at the expense of the lives and persons of his own subjects. He bore towards Hasim and Bedrudin that dislike which a narrow and dull mind feels towards those who are morally and intellectually his superiors, and such as a reigning prince not infrequently entertains towards the man who will succeed him on his throne. Accordingly he surrounded himself with a number of scoundrels, led by one Haji Seman, a man of low birth, the successor of Pangiran Usup as the Sultan's chief adviser, who fawned on and flattered him, and to whom he could pour forth his grievances; and these men, many of them pangirans and chiefs, fanned his animosities, and encouraged him in his evil courses, for they were still favourable to the piratical party, and were desirous of avenging the death of Pangiran Usup and the destruction of Marudu. The princes, especially Hasim, who had recently been publicly declared successor to the throne by the Sultan, with the title of Sultan Muda, and Bedrudin, were well aware that they were regarded with disfavour, and that there was a powerful party against them; they knew they were in danger, though they did not suspect that the danger

was so imminent, and had applied for protection or release from their engagements, but, to quote the Rajah, "they were not protected, they were not released, except by a bloody death in their endeavour to carry them out." The Sultan detested them as favouring the English Rajah, and inclined to a pro-British policy, and he resented having these men so near the throne, and that the succession should devolve on Hasim to the prejudice of his own reputed son, so he resolved to sweep them from his path, and to break his engagements with and to defy the English. As a further incentive his avariciousness was played upon, and it was pointed out to him how much he would gain by acquiring the riches of his uncles were he to put them to death. Swayed by his own atrocious motives, this wretched imbecile, "brutal in spite of his imbecility," who had "the head of an idiot and the heart of a pirate," readily yielded to the promptings of his perfidious counsellors, and issued orders for the despatch of all his uncles. So secretly were preparations made to carry out the execution of this mandate that the doomed princes were taken completely by surprise by the well-armed bands that silently and simultaneously surrounded their houses in the darkness of the night. With most of the brothers resistance was impossible, and they were soon butchered, but Bedrudin fought heroically. He could, however, do little against the large body of murderers opposed to him, with only a few followers to assist him. These latter were soon cut down or had fled. His sister and a favourite concubine remained, and fought by his side, as well as a faithful slave, a lad named Japar. Desperately wounded, having had his left wrist broken by a shot, his shoulder and chest cut open so as to disable his right arm, and his head and face slashed, but not before he had cut down several of his assassins, Bedrudin, with the women and the lad, who had also all been wounded, retired into the house and barred the door. He bade the lad bring him a keg of powder, break in the head, and strew some of the contents about himself and his female companions; then he drew off his signet ring, and ordered Japar to escape and bear it to his friend the Rajah, with the message that

he should tell the Queen of England of his fate, that he had been true to his engagements, and begging his friend, with whom his last thoughts were, never to forget him. Japar slipped through an aperture in the floor, dropped into the water, and swam to a canoe, in which he escaped. Then, whilst the murderers, awed by his courage and desperation, were hesitating to break into the house, the true-hearted prince applied the match which blew himself and his two noble companions into eternity.[1]

The Sultan Muda Hasim, though wounded, managed to escape from his burning house to the opposite side of the river with several of his brothers, his wife and children, but he was pursued and surrounded by numbers. Most of his brothers had been killed, and others wounded, and no hope remained to him but to throw himself on the mercy of his nephew, the Sultan. He sent messages to him to beg that his life might be spared, but this was peremptorily refused. Death being inevitable, he retreated to a boat that chanced to be moored to the bank, and placing a cask of gunpowder in the cabin called upon his three brothers and his sons who were with him to enter, and immediately firing the train, the whole party was blown up. Hasim, however, was not killed by the explosion, but, determined not to be taken alive, he put a pistol to his head and blew out his brains.

Of the many uncles of the Sultan but four escaped, and many of their relations, as well as other chiefs, were sacrificed. Hasim's full brother, Muhammad, was desperately wounded, and so cowed as to have his spirit broken. He was spared as being harmless. Another brother went permanently mad with terror. Thus the royal family had been nearly exterminated, and the omen of the death of Rajah Api fulfilled.

Japar escaped on board H.M.S. *Hazard*, which had arrived and anchored below Bruni some three months after the tragedy, and was taken in her to Kuching. He was instrumental in saving the life of Commander Egerton by warning him not to land, as a plot had been formed to take his life.

[1] The ring Bedrudin sent had been given him before he left Sarawak by the Rajah, who told Bedrudin to send it to him when he had need of him; it was seized by the Sultan before Japar escaped from Bruni.

When news of this crime, which took place at the end of December or the beginning of January, 1846, reached the Rajah he was deeply moved. Of Bedrudin, whose loss he considered irreparable, he wrote :—

A nobler, a braver, a more upright prince could not exist. I have lost a friend—he is gone and I remain ; I trust, but in vain, to be an instrument to bring punishment on the perpetrators of the atrocious deed. . . . My suzerain the Sultan !—the villain Sultan !—need expect no mercy from me, but justice he shall have. I no longer own his authority, or hold Sarawak under his gift . . . he has *murdered our friends*, the faithful *friends* of Her Majesty's Government, *because they were our friends*.

The Rajah trusted the British Government would take action against the Sultan, but if not, remembering he "was still at war with this murderer and traitor," he would make "one more determined struggle" to punish him and to rescue the survivors of the Sultan Muda's family, and if that failed, then Borneo[1] and all for which he had so long, so earnestly laboured, he considered must be abandoned. But help was drawing near, for Rear-Admiral Sir Thomas Cochrane on hearing of these troubles hastened from India with his squadron to support the Rajah,[2] and to bring the Sultan to account. The fleet arrived off Sarawak at the end of June, and, picking up the Rajah, the Admiral at once proceeded to Bruni, visiting Serikei and Kanowit up the Rejang on the way, to administer a warning to the people there. The Sultan, frightened at what he had done, and expecting reprisals, which, however, he was determined to oppose by force, strengthened the existing defences, threw up new ones, and called together 5000 men for the defence of the capital. He proclaimed that he was determined to have no more dealings with the English, and that he purposed to drive the English Rajah from Sarawak.

On the arrival of the fleet at the mouth of the Bruni river the Sultan made a clumsy attempt, similar to that he had made on Commander Egerton, to get the Admiral into

[1] He meant Bruni, which he had hoped to have restored to its former state of prosperity.

[2] Reports had been published that the Rajah was closely besieged in Kuching by the Sultan's forces.

his power. He sent two men, who represented themselves to be pangirans, in a gaily decked prahu to welcome the Admiral, with a letter to the Rajah, expressing hurt surprise at the conduct of Commander Egerton in not having visited him and in having refused his presents, and begging the Rajah to put no faith in Japar's tales. The messengers said that the Sultan would not permit the Admiral to take up more than two boats with him; but these men were detected by the Rajah to be men of no rank, so they were detained on board, and their prahu was secured astern.

On the 8th, having transferred his flag to the steam frigate *Spiteful*, the Admiral proceeded up to Bruni with the *Phlegethon* leading the way, and the *Royalist* which was towed by the *Spiteful*. The gunboats of the ships left behind also attended, and the total number of blue-jackets and marines was 600; yet the Brunis, trusting to their superiority in numbers, and to the really efficient steps they had taken to fortify the town and its approaches, felt confident that they could successfully oppose this formidable force, and opened fire on the *Phlegethon* as she approached the lower batteries. Fortunately the guns were aimed too high to do damage. The fire was at once returned,—guns, rockets, and muskets responding; the blue-jackets and marines dashed ashore, and the enemy, commanded by Haji Seman, not awaiting their onslaught, fled into the jungle, abandoning the guns. The squadron then advanced, silenced battery after battery, seven or eight in number, and captured the cannon in them, consisting of 68, 42, and 32 pounders, which, had they been well laid and served, would have seriously crippled the ships; and the forts were so strongly constructed and so well placed, that they would have been difficult to capture had they been manned by a less despicable foe. As it was, the loss incurred on both sides was but slight.

The Sultan, his army, and the population fled, and as night fell, Bruni was an empty shell. A week was spent by Captain Mundy of the *Iris*, with whom went the Rajah, in a fruitless endeavour to capture the Sultan, but he scampered

away beyond reach, and the force, after destroying his inland stronghold, returned to the ships.

The people soon began to return, and a provisional government was formed by the Rajah with Pangiran Mumin, who afterwards became Sultan, and Pangiran Muhammad at its head, and a message was despatched to the Sultan with assurances of safe-conduct, if he would return to Bruni, govern wisely and justly, and observe his engagements with the English to do all in his power to keep the piratical party in check. Sir Thomas Cochrane regretted that he had not the authority, as he had the power, to place the Rajah on the throne, a measure which he was convinced would have been hailed with acclamation by the whole people. After having completely destroyed all the batteries,[1] the Admiral sailed on July 20 to look up the piratical villages to the north-east of Bruni, taking the Rajah, and leaving the *Hazard* as a guard-ship at Bruni. Off Tempasuk a Lanun prahu was captured, having two Spanish captives on board, who had been taken off Manila; the crew of this prahu were sent in irons to Manila to be dealt with by the Spanish authorities—we may presume they never returned. Tempasuk was burnt on August the 1st, and Pandasan the next day. Both the *Royalist* and the *Ringdove* had brushes with pirate vessels, the former destroying two with their crews, and the latter one, but with the loss of her master and a marine.

After visiting the late Sherip Usman's town in Merudu, which it was found had not been occupied since its destruction just a year previously, the Admiral passed on to China, leaving Captain Mundy, whom the Rajah now joined on the *Iris*, to take any further operations against the pirates that might be found necessary. One pirate prahu was met with and destroyed, also another small Lanun stronghold near Pandasan. At Kimanis information was received that Haji Seman, after he had fled from Bruni, had fortified himself at Membakut, near the Kimanis river; he was attacked and

[1] The foregoing details are mainly taken from Mundy's *Rajah Brooke's Journals*. The captured cannon were sent to England. St. John says some were melted up to construct cannon for the Crimea.—*Forests in the Far East*. Brunis were famous brassfounders, and many of these guns must have been very old.

driven into the interior. The Lanuns shortly afterwards abandoned the north-west coast, and established themselves at Tungku on the east coast, where they were long left unmolested.

On the return of the Rajah to Bruni in the *Phlegethon* on August 19, he found the Sultan still absent, so sent him a message that if he returned he would be answerable for his safety, and in reply the Sultan sent a humble letter laying his throne and kingdom at the Rajah's feet. He at once returned and sued for pardon. The Rajah would not see him until the murderers of his uncles had been brought to justice, and until he had given convincing proof of his intention to govern his country uprightly, with the assistance of advisers worthy of trust; pardon he must ask of the Queen, upon whose flag he had fired, and the agreements he had previously made must be reratified. All this the Sultan engaged to do. In addition, he paid royal honours at the graves of his murdered relatives; and, taking the most humble tone and position, gave Sarawak to the Rajah unconditionally, and granted him the right of working coal.[1] But even then the Rajah refused to see him.

To conclude the story of Sultan Omar Ali, he gave little more trouble after the severe lesson he had been taught, became afflicted with cancer in the mouth, and died in 1852, when Pangiran Mumin succeeded to the throne. He was a brother-in-law to the murdered princes, but only remotely connected with the royal family, being descended from Muhammad Ali the twelfth Sultan of Bruni, in or about 1660, brother of the Sultan Abdul Jalil ul Akbar, the ancestor of Omar Ali, who was seventh in descent from him. The feeble-minded Abdul Mumin died at a great age in 1885, when he was succeeded by Hasim Jalil ul Alam Akmadin, the reputed son of Omar Ali; he died in 1906, over 100 years of age, and was succeeded by his son, the present Sultan, Muhammad Jamal ul Alam.

The Rajah returned to Kuching at the end of August in the *Phlegethon*, with "a perfect menagerie of old women and children," the unhappy survivors of the Sultan Muda's

[1] *Private Letters of the Rajah.*

family.[1] Many other families had already fled from Bruni to seek a refuge in the universal haven, Sarawak.

By the deed which the Rajah now bore back with him, the one under which Sarawak Proper is still held, the sovereignty of James Brooke and his heirs in perpetuity over the raj was acknowledged absolutely, and by it the Sultan surrendered his claim to suzerainty. No yearly payment was to be made for the province,[2] and it was left to the Rajah to dispose of as he pleased; hence he was at liberty to hand it over to a foreign government if he so wished.[3] Sarawak now became *de jure* independent; *de facto*, it had been independent for some years; and the Rajah "held a double claim to its possession—the will of a free people strengthened by the cession made by a sovereign, who was unable to rule his subjects."[4] Such being the position of the Sultan, the Rajah maintained the title *de jure* to be of small value, whilst the title derived from the election and support of a free people he considered of superior importance. The power of Bruni had become but a shadow, not only in Sarawak but along the coast as far as Oya, and the prerogative of the Sultan to grant their country to any one was disavowed by the people of Sarawak. Their ancestors had been free, and they had but a few years previously voluntarily placed themselves under the Bruni Government, upon certain conditions, but in the decay of the Government of Bruni these had been disregarded, and misrule succeeded. They rebelled and successfully maintained an independent position; they had offered their country to Holland; and had finally surrendered to Mr. Brooke, conditionally upon his becoming their ruler. All possession of territory in Borneo was a question of might, and the Sultan himself looked to the Rajah "to support his throne, and to preserve his government."[5]

[1] His son, the Pangiran Muda, is still alive in Bruni.

[2] The tribute was cancelled by the release of a debt due to the Rajah by the Sultan, the interest upon which was equivalent to the yearly tribute.

[3] Though this deed bore the seal of Pangiran Abdul Mumin, he confirmed it by another granted in 1853, after he had become Sultan. Only copies, attested by H.M.'s Consul-General, exist now, the originals, together with the two previous grants, having been burnt during the Chinese rebellion of 1857.

[4] Letter to the Earl of Clarendon, September 27, 1853.

[5] Captain Mundy said truly of the Rajah that he was the *de facto* sovereign of the

Though the question of the independence of Sarawak[1] has been placed beyond doubt by its recognition by the British Government in 1863 as an absolutely independent State, yet it has been maintained, and by some who should know better, that the country is still under the suzerainty of Bruni.

To conclude the eventful year of 1846, Captain Mundy returned to Sarawak in December with instructions from the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Lord Palmerston, conveyed through Sir Thomas Cochrane, to occupy the Island of Labuan, after consulting with the Rajah as to the best mode of carrying out his instructions.[2] He at once proceeded to Bruni, the Rajah going to Singapore, Labuan was ceded on the 18th, and the British flag was hoisted on the island on December 24.

The Dutch Government had viewed the Rajah's elevation and settlement at Sarawak, as well as the past and recent operations of the British on the north-west coast, with unfeigned jealousy, and had, during the last two years, repeatedly remonstrated with the British Government for countenancing these proceedings, which the Dutch Minister, by a stretch of imagination, exaggerated into having been the cause of a general uneasiness arising in Holland "as to the security and integrity of the Netherlands possessions in the Eastern Archipelago," and a suspicion of "the Government having surrendered, or very nearly so, the Eastern Archipelago to England." Further, "the King's Government," extravagantly wrote the Minister, "cannot forget how much it has had to suffer at different epochs in India from the practices of this individual (the Rajah), whom the Netherlands authorities have everywhere found in their way, and constantly in opposition to them." In his position as H.M.'s Political Agent, "combined with his long experience and intimate knowledge of Borneo," with "his desire to annoy, and his ill-will towards the Netherlands," the Minister considered him a very inconvenient and harassing personage to the Netherlanders and their Government. The Netherlands

whole coast of Borneo from point Api (he should have said Cape Datu) to Marudu, 700 miles in extent.

[1] The territory of Sarawak then extended to Cape Kedurong.

[2] Mundy, *op. cit.*

Government alleged that the Rajah's action in Sarawak and the occupation of Labuan were an abandonment of the spirit of the Treaty of 1824, if not of the letter. But by that Treaty the Dutch sphere of influence in Borneo had been limited to the equator, north of the line remaining within the sphere of British influence. As the Minister foresaw, Lord Aberdeen, on these grounds, denied that the recent measures taken in Borneo were in any way a contravention of the treaty or inimical to Dutch interests. Lord Aberdeen, in supporting the Rajah, eulogised him as a gentleman of high character, whose "efforts have been directed to the furtherance of civilization, to the discouragement of piratical pursuits, and to the promotion of the welfare of the native population," and contended that he had obtained his possessions "in the most legitimate manner." He further implied that the Rajah's legitimate objects and pursuits having met with undue interference by the Netherlands authorities, occasion had perhaps been given for disputes arising between him and the Netherlands Government, for he was naturally "not favorably disposed to the extension of Dutch influence in the parts where he had acquired possessions";[1] an influence which the Governor-General of Netherlands India in his rescript of January 1846, mentioned in footnote, p. 93, said his Government did not exercise in the State of the Sultan of Bruni, which extended from cape Datu to the Kimanis river.

The Rajah wrote:—

> The Netherlands Government has made an attack upon me, but it has failed. I am astonished at the misrepresentations to which it stoops. . . . I never had any dispute with the Dutch authorities; and the only communications which have passed between the Resident of Sambas and myself have been of a most friendly kind.[2]

But though she failed, it was some years before Holland gave up her pretensions to Sarawak, pretensions which twice before they could have realised—in 1833, when Pangiran Usup offered her the country, and, a few years later, when the Sarawak people asked for her protection; but the one involved a monetary equivalent, and the other

[1] From *Blue Book*, March 2, 1854. [2] *Private Letters.*

military support, and she thought to acquire the country by cheaper methods, which the Rajah knew she still meant to do after his death if she could. Without his influence, and without his influential friends, he did not think that Sarawak could subsist after he was gone, and this it was that made him so urgent to be put under British protection. When, finally, the British Government did recognise Sarawak as an independent State, the Netherlands Minister was asked if he were aware of the recognition. The reply was, "Holland will not recognise Sarawak, as the Government is convinced that Sarawak cannot last beyond the lifetime of Sir James Brooke." He added, "I told you this seven years ago, and I see no reason, from recent events, to alter my opinion."[1] This was in 1863.

The early part of 1847 was spent by the Rajah recruiting his health on Penang hill, where a letter was received from the Sultan notifying that Haji Seman had given himself up at Bruni, and asking for instructions of the Admiral and the Rajah as to his disposal. It was not considered that his execution was now necessary as an example, and the Sultan was informed that the past could be buried in oblivion, but that misconduct in the future would revive its recollection.[2]

In Singapore the Rajah received instructions from the Foreign Office to proceed to Bruni to conclude a treaty with the Sultan for the arrangement of commercial relations, and for the mutual suppression of piracy; to reserve to H.M.'s Government power and jurisdiction over all British subjects residing within the Sultanate, and to bind the Sultan not to alienate any portion of his dominions to any foreign power or to others without the sanction of her Majesty's Government. The Rajah proceeded to Bruni in the *Nemesis*, touching at Kuching on his way, and the treaty was signed on May 27. On the 30th, when leaving the Bruni river, the *Nemesis* was hailed by a passing canoe, and received the information that a fleet of pirates was in the offing. The steamer immediately started in pursuit,

[1] Letter from the Rajah to the Tuan Muda, 1864.
[2] From Mundy, *op. cit.*

and the pirates, finding escape impossible, came to anchor in a small bay with their bows seaward, and secured their prahus, eleven in all, together with hawsers. The engagement which followed, and which lasted several hours, the pirates fighting desperately, resulted in five of the pirate prahus being destroyed, and six effecting their escape.[1] The *Nemesis* lost two killed and six wounded, and the pirates about sixty killed. Fifty more, who had escaped inland, were captured by the Sultan's men, and executed in Bruni. About 100 captives, mostly Chinese and Malays, were rescued and sent to Singapore. The pirates, who were Baleninis, were on their return from a year's cruise laden with plunder and captives. They had proposed to attack Kuching, but had thought better of it.[2]

The desire to visit England was now strong upon the Rajah. Besides personal reasons, the wish to see his relations and friends, and to obtain change and rest, he also felt that he could effect more than by correspondence were he personally to interest Ministers in Bornean affairs and urge on them the necessity of a decided course for the suppression of piracy, which could be put down were a steady course pursued instead of mere convulsive efforts, and Sulu he wished to see crushed.[3] Sarawak, where all was peaceful, would be safe under the administration of his connection, Mr. A. C. Crookshank.[4] Labuan was established as a naval station under naval administration. Bruni had been reduced to subjection, and was powerless to give further trouble, and the coast was generally quiet; so, there being nothing requiring attention in the immediate future, he sailed from Singapore in July, and arrived in England early in October.

And now honours rained on him. He was presented

[1] Of these, three foundered from injuries received during the engagement, so that few returned home to tell the tale. It took the Balenini about fifteen years to forget the lesson.—*Sir James Brooke*, St. John.

[2] Mundy, *op. cit.*

[3] *Private Letters.*

[4] He joined the Rajah in March, 1843, having previously served in the H.E.I. Co.'s Navy, and became Police Magistrate and Government Secretary. In 1863 he was appointed Resident of Sarawak. He frequently administered the Government during the absences of the late and the present Rajah. He retired in 1873, and died in 1891.

with the freedom of the City of London; Oxford University conferred upon him the degree of LL.D.; he was graciously received at Windsor by the Queen and the Prince Consort; was appointed Governor of Labuan, and Commissioner and Consul-General in Borneo, and made a K.C.B.[1] The United Service, the Army and Navy, the Athenæum, Travellers, and other Clubs elected him an honorary member. He was lionised and fêted, and was received with marked distinction by every one, including Ministers.

He sailed from England on February 1, 1848, with his Labuan staff, in the *Mæander*, commanded by his old friend and ally, Captain Keppel, and having the present Rajah on board as sub-lieutenant.[2] After spending a few months in Singapore making preparations for the establishment of his new colony, he arrived at the Muaratebas entrance of the Sarawak river in September; here he left the *Mæander*, and was triumphantly escorted up-river by the whole Kuching population amidst general rejoicings.

He found affairs in his little raj had not been conducted quite so well as he could have wished, and that there were evidences of renewed activity on the part of the pirates. Pangiran Makota was in power at Bruni, and that was a menace to the good conduct of both the external and internal affairs of the Sultanate. The Sultan had been in direct communication with the Sekrang Dayaks, amongst whom both Sherip Mular and Sherip Ahmit were busy intriguing, and collecting the dissatisfied party which had been scattered. Hostile operations on the part of the Saribas were only checked by the arrival of the *Mæander*.

On September 14, the Rajah was joined by his nephew, Captain James Brooke-Johnson,[3] of the Connaught Rangers, as his official A.D.C. He assumed the surname of his

[1] The warrant of investiture was issued by her Majesty on May 22, 1848.

[2] Amongst others who came out with the Rajah in the *Mæander* were Mr. Spenser St. John, afterwards Sir Spenser St. John, G.C.M.G., the Rajah's Secretary; and Mr. Hugh Low, afterwards Sir Hugh Low, G.C.M.G., Colonial Secretary at Labuan. Mr. St. John was Consul-General at Bruni from 1853-1861; he left Borneo the latter year upon promotion. Mr. Low had before spent some three years in Sarawak botanising. He left Labuan in 1877, when he was appointed Resident of Perak.

[3] The eldest son of the Rev. Francis Charles Johnson, Vicar of White Lackington, Somersetshire, by Emma, the Rajah's second sister.

uncle, and was given the title of Tuan Besar. Although he was always looked upon as the heir-presumptive, the title of Rajah Muda was only conferred upon him when he was officially and publicly recognised by the Rajah as his heir in 1861.

"To give a spirit of national pride to the natives," the Rajah now granted the country a flag,[1] and this was hoisted with due ceremony on September 21. Viscount Palmerston, in a despatch dated June 20, 1849, subsequently conveyed the approval of H.M.'s Government of the flag having been hoisted, in order, with the sanction of the British Government, to afford a recognised permanency to the country.

The Rajah then sailed in the *Mæander* to Labuan, where he was busy for some time arranging and organising the colony, but, falling a victim, with many others, to the insalubrity of the climate, he took a sea voyage in the *Mæander*, visiting several places on the north-west coast and passing on to Sulu, where he established friendly relations with the Sultan, and paved the way to a treaty being effected, by which Sulu would be placed within the sphere of British influence. He returned to Labuan in January, 1849, nearly recovered, and the next month was back in Sarawak again, to face an anxious time, a year of trouble and strife.

The Rajah had done all he could in England to move the British Government to take energetic action effectually to stamp out piracy, especially in regard to the Saribas and Sekrang, amongst whom the peaceable party had now been completely overborne by the piratical faction, and this would have been prevented had the British Government sanctioned the Rajah's scheme of building a fort in the disturbed district. Alone, he was powerless to effect much, if anything. The *Mæander* had been specially fitted for taking action against these pirates, and her captain specially appointed on account of the experience he had already gained in dealing with them, as it was intended that the frigate should be detailed for this service; but trouble having

[1] Yellow ground, with black and red cross, as shown in illustration—the arms of the Brookes. The Government flag is distinguished by a crown in the centre; the Rajah's flag is a burgee, or swallow-tailed flag.

occurred in China, she was recalled by the Admiral, and the Rajah was left with the H.E.I.C. *Nemesis* only, a steamer quite inadequate for the purpose; and, being required to keep up communication between Labuan and Singapore, her station being at the latter place, she could be only occasionally placed at his disposal.

The departure of the *Mæander*, and the Rajah's long absence in the north, had emboldened the Saribas and Sekrangs to prepare for fresh atrocities. Their insolence had, moreover, so increased that they went so far as to send the Rajah a message of defiance, daring him to come out against them, taunting him with cowardice, and comparing him to a woman.[1]

On March 2nd, the Rajah received news that a large pirate fleet of one hundred prahus had put to sea, and, after having captured several trading vessels, the crews of which they had put to death, had proceeded up the Sadong river, where they had killed upwards of one hundred or more Malay men, women, and children, and had carried others into slavery. Within the three previous months they had killed three hundred persons, burnt several villages, and captured numerous prahus.[2] This expedition was led by the Laksamana, the Malay chief of the Saribas;[3] it was checked at the town of Gedong, which was well prepared for defence, and too much on the alert to be taken by surprise.

An artifice of these pirates, and they never attempted by force what could be acquired by stratagem, was this: some of the party remained behind and assumed the clothes of their victims, and the umbrella-shaped hats of palm leaf commonly used by those harvesting in the sun, which would completely conceal their features; thus disguised they paddled down stream, and called in Malay to the women to issue from their hiding-places, as they had come to convey them to a place of safety. The poor creatures, supposing

[1] Keppel, *Voyage to the Indian Archipelago.* [2] *Private Letters.*

[3] Of his fifteen sons, Abangs Apong, Chek, Tek, and Bunsu all served the Government afterwards; they were distinguished more for bravery than for rectitude, but they were faithful and useful servants. Another son was killed during the operations up the Saribas subsequent to the action of Beting Maru. The Laksamana lived for years after these events, and was about ninety when he died.

that these were of their own tribe, ran down with their children in their arms only to be speared and their heads hacked off by these wolves in sheep's clothing.[1] On the last day of February, a numerous and industrious population was gathering in the harvest, and on March the 1st every house was plundered, and scattered about the fields were the mangled bodies of the reapers, and in the villages lay the headless trunks of men, aged women, and children too young for captivity.

Not a day passed without news reaching Kuching of some village burned or of some trading vessel captured. After the attack on Sadong, while the Saribas hovered along the coast, crowds of refugees arrived in Kuching. From all parts they came; from the river of Matu alone twenty prahus full of men, women, and children, and from Kalaka many hundreds. They said that they could endure life no longer in their own country, continually engaged in resisting these murderous attacks, and losing numbers of their people at the hands of the Sekrangs and Saribas.

"No news except of Dayaks, and rumours of Dayaks. Dayaks here, Dayaks there, and Dayaks everywhere," so wrote the Rajah.

The Kalaka river had also been laid waste. Hunt in 1812 described Kalaka as being one of the principal ports of trade on the north-west coast,[2] and the country as producing large quantities of grain. But this was before the Sea-Dayaks had become pirates. In 1849, the river had been so devastated by piratical attacks that all cultivation had been abandoned, and its once flourishing town and villages deserted, with the exception of two that were small. "Never before had I been so struck with the irreparable mischief done by the piratical tribes, as when I saw this lovely country so completely deserted," so wrote Mr. S. St. John in 1849.

The ravages of these murderous Dayaks had been peculiarly destructive in the delta of the Rejang, once well populated by the quiet and industrious Melanaus, the pro-

[1] Keppel, *op. cit.*

[2] The plains on both banks of the river evidence a former cultivation on an extensive scale.

ducers of the Bornean sago brought to the market of Singapore. The pirates not only destroyed the villages and plantations, but captured many richly laden prahus, freighted with the produce of this district on their way to dispose of their lading in the British Settlement of Singapore, and in Sambas and Pontianak. Like the Malays of Kalaka, nearly all the inhabitants had fled, most to Sarawak, some to other places.

During the first six months of 1849, some 600 persons fell victims to these savages; it must be borne in mind that the districts inhabited by these people and those attacked by them were then in Bruni territory, and outside the raj of Sarawak.

In 1849, it was reckoned that the Saribas had 6000 fighting men, the Sekrangs an equal number, and those Sekrangs and Saribas who had moved across to the Kanowit, Katibas, and Poi, affluents of the Rejang river, could muster 8000 warriors,[1] making, with their Malay allies, a total of 25,000 men living on piracy and murder. Secure on their rivers, in their stockades, in their jungles, in their large and well-constructed boats, and in their numbers, they scoffed at warnings, and proceeded from crime to crime until the whole country from Bruni to Sarawak was nearly their own.

In desperation, and with the hope of checking these outrages, the Rajah at once started against the pirates with his own little flotilla of some twenty-four war prahus manned by 800 Malays, but he was driven back by the north-east monsoon, perhaps fortunately, as his force was totally inadequate. Then the *Nemesis*, under Commander Wallage, arrived, and the Rajah, feeling he was now strong enough to effect something, sallied forth again on March 25, with the same native force and four of the boats of the *Nemesis*. The bala[2] was augmented by eighty-four native prahus with over 2000 friendlies, all thirsting for revenge. Both branches of the Kalaka were ascended, and from the left-hand branch the native levies crossed over into the Rembas, a large affluent of the Saribas, and here several

[1] St. John, *Life of Sir James Brooke.*
[2] An army in Malay and Dayak.

strongholds were destroyed, with large quantities of rice and salt; the enemy were, however, absent on an expedition, and but few fighting men were left behind. The Rajah then proceeded up the Saribas, the entrance of which the *Nemesis* had been sent on to guard, and at the mouth of the Rembas branch met a large force of Saribas Dayaks which hurriedly retreated. These were on their way to effect a junction with the Sekrangs, the Malay town of Banting up the Lingga being the objective. Ten prahus of Sadong friendlies on their way home were met and attacked at night by these Sekrangs, who had a force of 150 bangkongs, but, the Balau Dayaks opportunely coming to the assistance of the former, the Sekrangs were defeated and driven back to their own country. This well-contrived expedition then terminated in a return to Sarawak, and though the pirates had not suffered any great loss, especially in lives, a severe check had been administered, and by preventing a junction between the Saribas and Sekrangs their piratical venture for that occasion had been spoiled.

After his return from this expedition the Rajah took advantage of the lull that was certain to follow, for the Dayaks would lie low for a time fully expecting to be again attacked, and proceeded to visit his little colony at Labuan. From thence he passed on to Sulu, where he concluded a commercial treaty with the Sultán, returning to Kuching at the end of May. In the meantime Admiral Sir Francis Collier had despatched the *Albatross*, Commander Farquhar,[1] to Sarawak, to take the *Mæander's* place, and she had arrived at Kuching before the Rajah's return in the *Nemesis*, and had there been joined by the *Royalist*, Lieutenant Everest. Preparations were pushed forward to deliver a final blow to the Saribas and Sekrang pirates, who, now the Ramathan, or fast month, had commenced, considered themselves safe, under the firm persuasion that the Rajah would not move against them so long as it lasted, out of regard for the religious scruples of the Malays.

The expedition started on July 24. It comprised the

[1] Afterwards Admiral Sir Arthur Farquhar, K.C.B. He died in 1908, aged ninety-three.

Nemesis, the *Royalist*, and the *Ranee* (the *Mæander's* little steam tender), seven men-of-war boats, and the Rajah's Malay force of eighteen war-prahus manned by 640 Malays. At the mouth detachments of Lundu and Balau Sea-Dayaks, and Malays from Samarahan and Sadong joined, which brought the native force up to a total of seventy prahus with 2500 men. The *Royalist* was towed by the *Nemesis* into the Batang Lupar, and left to guard that river off the mouth of the Lingga, and the latter went on to the entrance of the Saribas, where, with the ships' boats, she took up her position. The main force joined her on the 28th, and the same evening information was received that a large piratical bala, under the command of the Datu Patinggi of Saribas and the principal Malays, had left the Saribas two days previously and had gone northwards. The Rajah and Captain Farquhar immediately determined to intercept them on their return. With twelve war prahus and two men-of-war cutters the Rajah took up a position across the mouth of the Kalaka, to prevent the pirates gaining their way home by that river. The *Nemesis*, with the rest of the force, blocked the Saribas, and the only other route open to them *via* the Batang Lupar was guarded by the *Royalist*. There was an alternative way back, a long one, up the Rejang and Kanowit, but they were not likely to take this. On the evening of the 31st, a rocket sent up from the *Rajah Singha*,[1] the Rajah's war prahu, announced the approach of the enemy. They came on boldly, and, perceiving the force at the entrance of the Kalaka, but not the more formidable one hidden by the long promontory separating the mouths of the two rivers, dashed on for the Saribas with defiant yells, to encounter in the growing darkness greater peril, and thus commenced the most famous fight in the Sarawak annals, which brought a just retribution on these savage pirates and for ever broke their power, the battle of Beting Maru.[2] Met with showers of grape, cannister, rockets, and musketry from the *Nemesis* and the boats, and the savage onslaughts of the native levies mad for revenge, well

[1] Anglice, King Lion.

[2] Beting Maru is the name of a long sand-spit running into the sea between the Kalaka and Saribas rivers off the Maru river.

led by the Rajah's English and Malay officers, and with their retreat intercepted by the Rajah's division, the pirates were soon thrown into confusion, and thought only of escape. But cut off in all directions, for five hours, in bright moonlight, they had to sustain a series of encounters extending over a distance of ten miles. At midnight all was over. About a dozen bangkongs escaped, whilst over a hundred were destroyed, and the enemy had lost about 300 killed. This loss would have been far heavier had the Rajah allowed his native forces to intercept the retreat of the great numbers who had landed and escaped into the jungle, and this could have easily been effected; as it was, 500 died of wounds, exposure, and starvation, or were cut off before they could reach their homes. Of those who succeeded in escaping up the Saribas that night was the famous Dayak chief Linggir, who, with seventeen war-boats, had made a desperate attack on the *Nemesis*, which resulted in the destruction of all the boats with their crews except his.[1]

Had this expedition started but a few days earlier, the mischief that had been done would have been prevented, though that mischief was far less than it would have been had not the pirates been forced to beat a hasty retreat on receiving news that so powerful a force was out against them. They had attacked Matu, but that town was found to be too well prepared to be carried without considerable loss, and, their aim being not glory but to procure heads, captives, and plunder, with the least possible risk to themselves, they retreated in search of easier prey after sustaining a loss of ten killed, but not before they had taken a detached house in which they obtained seven heads and captured four girls.

[1] This same Linggir in 1845 attempted to murder the Rajah and his officers and other English guests whilst at dinner in the Rajah's house at Kuching. He marched into the dining-room with eighty armed men, pretending to pay a friendly visit. The Rajah and his guests adopted the only policy open to them, and pretended as well to be friendly, for they were completely at the mercy of the Dayaks. They entertained their unwelcome guests with wine and cigars whilst waiting for the Datus, to whom the Rajah had contrived covertly to send a message. The Datu Temanggong arrived first with thirty men, and then came the Datu Bandar with fifty men. The Datus wished to kill Linggir for his intended treachery, the Rajah, however, spared him, perhaps unwisely, but he had to slink away to his boat with a flea in his ear. He had actually brought with him a basket to contain the Rajah's head. He afterwards became a peaceable citizen, and very friendly to the white men.

Palo they had plundered, and had there seized three girls;[1] they spared the place as being the main source of their salt supply. Two vessels trading to Singapore were captured, and the crew of one were all killed. Serikei proved too strong for them. A detachment had gone westward, and off Sambas they killed some Chinese fishermen and took their heads. At Sirhasan, one of the Natuna islands, they captured a trading vessel, and on their way back to join the main fleet attacked the Malays living at the mouth of Muaratebas, but were repulsed after a desperate fight. A trading prahu was there seized, the owner and five of the crew being killed. Coming across Abang Husin, a nephew of the Datu Temanggong, they killed him and his boat's crew of six, after a gallant defence.

A couple of days having been spent in destroying the captured bangkongs and securing prisoners, the expedition proceeded up the Saribas river. After some exciting episodes and hard work in cutting their way through innumerable trees, which had been felled across the river to impede their progress, the force reached Paku, which was taken and burnt for the second time. The expedition then proceeded up the Rejang, to punish the Sekrang Dayaks living in the Kanowit. Eighteen villages were destroyed, and the country laid waste for a hundred miles. This done, the Rajah returned to Kuching with the whole force, arriving there on August the 24th. With him came many Serikei people, who wished to escape from the tyranny of Sherip Masahor,[2] an infamous and intriguing half-bred Arab chief, who appears to have but lately settled in the Rejang as the Bruni governor, and who in the near future was to cause the Sarawak Government considerable trouble.

After the battle of Beting Maru, the well-inclined Malay and Dayak chiefs of the Sekrang were once more raised to power, and the Rajah built a fort at Sekrang, of which Sherip Matusain, who has been before mentioned as having taken a prominent part on the side of the Sarawak Malays in the rebellion against Bruni, was placed in charge. The

[1] These unfortunate girls, and those taken at Matu, were barbarously murdered by the pirates to prevent their being rescued.

[2] Or better, Mashhor, an Arabic word meaning illustrious.

fort was built to uphold the friendly and non-piratical party against the interior piratical tribes, to prevent the latter passing down to the sea, and as a position for the advancement of commerce. It was built entirely by Sekrang Malays and Dayaks under the supervision of Mr. Crookshank, and when Mr. Brereton [1] went there shortly afterwards to take charge, at the request of the natives that a European might be placed over them, he was entirely dependent on their good-will, having no force of any sort, to support his authority.

The Saribas and the Sekrangs now submitted, the former too utterly broken to do further mischief by sea, and the latter frightened by the lesson that had been administered to their allies and themselves,[2] and by the establishment of a Government station in their district. Such was the effect of this chastisement that piracy was almost completely put an end to in these turbulent tribes; then had the land rest to recover, the waste places to revive, the towns to be rebuilt, and the population to increase. In but a very few years the bulk of these very tribes which had been the scourge of the country were reduced to peaceable and industrious citizens.

But trouble far-reaching, on which he had not calculated, was in store for the Rajah through this expedition. It came at a time when he was weakened in health from continuous exposure and the severe strain he had undergone, which had brought him near death's door, and it came from a quarter the least expected. He "had risked life, given money, and sacrificed health to effect a great object;"[3] and had made the coast from cape Datu to Marudu bay as safe as the English Channel to vessels of all flags and all sizes, and now he had to bear with the malicious tongues and persecutions of the humanity-mongers of England, who were first prompted to attack the Rajah by his discarded agent, Mr. Wise. This man was embittered against the Rajah for his refusal to sell Sarawak to a company; by being called to account for a

[1] Mr. W. Brereton first came to Sarawak in the *Samarang*, as a midshipman, in 1843. In 1848 he left the Navy and joined the Rajah. He was first stationed at Labuan. He was only twenty years of age when appointed to take charge of Sekrang.

[2] The Sekrangs lost heavily at the battle of Beting Maru.

[3] *Private Letters.*

loss he had caused the Rajah of some thousands of pounds; and by some unfavourable comments the Rajah had made on his actions, which had come to his knowledge owing to certain private letters of the Rajah not intended for his eyes having fallen into his hands. Wise had offered to make the Rajah "one of the richest commoners in England," and presumedly saw his way to becoming one too, but the Rajah preferred "the real interests of Sarawak and the plain dictates of duty to the golden baited hook."[1]

Cobden, Hume, Sidney Herbert, and afterwards Gladstone, as well as others of that faction, took up the cause of the pirates, and the Rajah and the naval officers who had been engaged since 1843 in suppressing the Saribas and Sekrangs were attacked with acrimony as butchers of peaceful and harmless natives—and all for the sake of extending the Sarawak raj. The *Spectator* and the *Daily News* bitterly assailed the Rajah, relying upon information supplied through the medium of a Singapore newspaper; and the Peace Society and the Aborigines Protection Society, laid on a false scent by those whom they should not have trusted, became scurrilous in their advocacy of cold-blooded murderers and pirates.

After having brought the "*cruel butchery*" of Beting Maru to the attention of the House of Commons on three occasions, Joseph Hume, on July 12, 1850, moved an address to her Majesty, bringing to the notice of the House "one of the most atrocious massacres that had ever taken place in his time." He supported the motion with glaring and wilful mis-statements, and brought disgraceful charges against the Rajah, whom he branded as "the promoter of deeds of bloodshed and cruelty." The Navy he charged with wholesale murder, and the poor victims of the massacre he described as a harmless and timid people.[2]

Cobden, who supported the motion, called the battle of

[1] *Private Letters.*

[2] To show how these charges were supported by wilful and gross exaggerations, that could only have been made for the express purpose of deceiving the public, and which were as ridiculous as they were mischievous, Hume stated that it was doubtful whether a portion of the Royal Navy of China, which was reported to be off the coast at the time for the purpose of making peace with these people (the Saribas and Sekrangs), had not been destroyed by the expedition!

Beting Maru a human battue, than which there was never anything more unprovoked. He could not do homage to the Rajah as a great philanthropist seeing that he had no other argument for the savages than extermination.

The Rajah was ably defended by Mr. Henry Drummond, who exposed Wise's conduct; and the motion was lost by a majority of 140 in a House of 198.

At Birmingham, Cobden asserted that the Rajah, "who had gone out to the Eastern Archipelago as a private adventurer, had seized upon a territory as large as Yorkshire, and then drove out the natives; and who, under the pretence that they were pirates, subsequently sent for our fleet and men to massacre them . . . the atrocities perpetrated by Sir James Brooke in Borneo had been continually quoted in the Austrian newspapers as something which threw into the shade the horrible atrocities of Haynau himself."

The following year, on July 10, Hume moved for a Royal Commission to enquire into the proceedings of Sir James Brooke, but this was negatived by 230 votes to 19. He went a little further this time, and drew harrowing pictures of "cruel butcheries, and brutal murders of the helpless and defenceless." Sir James Brooke, he said, attacked none but the poor Dayaks, and even their wives and children were destroyed. He even went so far as to deny that the Saribas were head-hunters.

Gladstone bore high testimony to the Rajah's character and motives. His entire confidence in the Rajah's honour and integrity led him to accept his statements with unqualified and unreserved belief. He adjudged the Dayaks of being addicted to barbarous warfare and piracy, and maintained that there were not sufficient grounds for the motion, against which he voted. He, however, contended that most of the pirates were killed when not resisting, and had been deliberately sacrificed in the act of fleeing. This unhappily gave rise to doubts, which subsequently caused him to entirely change his opinions, and to completely veer round to the other side.

Lord Palmerston denounced the charges against the Rajah "as malignant and persevering persecution of an

honourable man," and Mr. Drummond rightly denied "that, from beginning to end, this motion had any other foundation than a personal determination to ruin Sir James Brooke." "The whole of this transaction from first to last was a very discreditable affair," he said. "The gentlemen of England echoed him,"[1] and the nation too, judging by the tone of the press, which (with the exception of one or two papers), from *The Times* downwards, supported the Rajah.[2]

Her Majesty's Government had notified the Rajah of their approval of all he had done, and he was instructed to follow the same course should a similar necessity arise.

But Wise, Hume, Cobden, and their adherents were only checked, and, huffed by their defeats, continued their efforts to ruin the Rajah's character and administration with increased bitterness, unfortunately in the end to obtain a partial success; but we will leave this subject for a while, to turn briefly to events in Sarawak.

As a commentary on Mr. Cobden's assertion that the natives were being driven out of Sarawak, the population of the raj in 1850 had increased to 50,000 from 8000 in 1840, and this increase was due to immigration from the neighbouring countries, where the people had been the constant prey of pirates, head-hunters, and their own oppressive rulers, and for these over-burdened people the Rajah had supplied a haven. The Chinese colony in upper Sarawak was augmented by the arrival of five thousand Chinese refugees from Pemangkat in Dutch territory, who had come to Sarawak to escape the tyranny of their more powerful neighbours and rivals, the Chinese of Montrado. These latter had successfully rebelled against the authority of the Dutch, and were now oppressing their weaker neighbours,

[1] Keppel, *Voyage to the Indian Archipelago.*

[2] The important fact that in all their maraudíng expeditions the Saribas and Sekrang Dayaks were mixed up with the Malays of the Saribas and Batang Lupar, who not only commanded and led them, but accompanied them in large numbers seems to have been quite overlooked by both the Rajah's accusers and his supporters. This in itself is a sufficient indication of the piratical nature of these expeditions. The character of these Malays as pirates was at least beyond question, and to assert that they went with these poor "harmless and timid" Dayaks to assist them in their intertribal feuds would be a very wide stretch of imagination. We have shown that the force routed on Beting Maru was led by Malays.

both Chinese and Dayak. The Kayan and Kenyahs of the Baram, who had been in rebellion against the Sultan, had sent messages offering to accept the Rajah as their chief, and those of the Rejang assisted in building the new fort at the mouth of the Kanowit. This fort was erected by the Rajah to protect the inhabitants of the Rejang delta, and of Oya and Muka, by blocking the egress by the Kanowit river to the Sekrang and Saribas Dayaks. All these countries, including the Sekrang, where a station had already been established, were under the *de jure* rule of the Sultan, but the inhabitants now looked upon the Rajah as their ruler. The Sultan had long been helpless to govern the disturbed districts; his authority was not recognised by the population, and the chiefs appointed by him acted to gain their own ends, the enriching of themselves at the expense of the people. The Sultan had placed himself in the Rajah's hands, and was well pleased that he should pacify and introduce order into these districts, more perhaps in his own interests than in those of his own people, for whose welfare he cared little; they paid him no revenue, and that he hoped the Rajah would secure for him.

Bandar Kasim, in spite of warnings, was again oppressing his people in the Sadong. The Rajah had deposed him in 1848, and had appointed his brother, Abang Leman,[1] in his place, but the change brought no benefit to the people, it gave them but an additional tyrant, for both were now behaving badly, and the Bandar had to be removed.

After visiting Labuan, the Rajah went to Penang for a much-needed change, and there received instructions from the Foreign Office to proceed to Siam on a diplomatic mission. He left for Bangkok in August. To quote his own words: "The mission was a dead failure, as the Siamese are as hostile and opposed to Europeans as any people can well be. I had a very trying time of it, and altogether got rid of an unpleasant and critical position without loss of national and individual credit." A short time before an American mission had also been similarly repulsed.

[1] Married to a daughter of the Datu Patinggi Gapur. He was afterwards selected by Sherip Masahor's party to murder the present Rajah, but the task was not to his liking.

During the Rajah's absence, an envoy from the United States had arrived at Kuching bearing a letter from the President addressed to him as Sovereign Prince of Sarawak, and expressing a desire to enter into friendly relations. The envoy informed the Rajah by letter that having been entrusted with full powers he was ready to sign a treaty with Sarawak, and that he was to thank the Rajah "in the name of the American nation for his exertions in the suppression of piracy," and to compliment him on his noble and "humane endeavours to bring his subjects and the neighbouring tribes of Malays into a condition of civilisation." Lord Palmerston saw no objection to the Rajah entering into diplomatic relations as Rajah of Sarawak with the United States.[1]

In January, 1851, the Rajah, leaving Captain Brooke in charge, again left for England on account of the bad state of his health. He came home for rest and quiet, but this was denied him, and he had to sum up all his energies, and expend time and money to contend against the active and bitter hostility of his Radical opponents in England, who in spite of adverse majorities in the House of Commons and the opposition of some of the most prominent politicians in both Houses, continued their malignant persecution with great persistency both in and out of Parliament.

In 1853, the Aberdeen coalition Ministry came into power, which, like all coalitions, was feeble and lived by compromise. This Ministry agreed to give what Hume and his faction asked, and had thrice been refused by the House by large majorities,[2] a commission of enquiry into the conduct of the Rajah, before which he was to be called upon to defend himself against allegations scouted by the House, the incorrectness of which could be proved by the leading statesmen of the day, including such men as the Earl of Derby, Earl Grey, Viscount Palmerston, and Lord John Russell.[3] The Ministry most disingenuously kept their decision a secret from the Rajah until after he had left England, though not from Hume, who was able to send information to his coadjutors in Singapore that it was granted.

[1] From *Life of Sir James Brooke*, St. John.

[2] May 1850, 145 to 20; June 1850, 169 to 29; July 1851, 230 to 19.

[3] The Rajah to Lord Clarendon, December 25, 1853.

They had got up an address to him, by the most unscrupulous devices, expressing approval of all that he had done, and urging that an enquiry might be instituted into the conduct of the Rajah by a Commission sent from England. This address was purported to have been signed by fifty-three merchants of Singapore. Afterwards, when the Commission sat in Singapore, only twenty-seven merchant firms were found to exist there, and of these twenty-two had signed an address of confidence in the Rajah. Some of those who had signed the address to Hume, and who put in an appearance before the Commission, exposed the way in which their signatures had been obtained by misrepresentations.

On April 30th, 1852, a great dinner was given to the Rajah at the London Tavern, to mark the sense entertained of the eminent services rendered by him in the interests of commerce and humanity, by his endeavours to put down the evils of piracy in the Eastern Archipelago, and by his labours to advance civilisation in that part of the world. The company, which numbered two hundred, included members of Parliament, Governors of the Bank of England, East India Company Directors, officers in the Army and Navy, and many others.

The Rajah delivered a speech which, for truth and feeling, language and action, will never be forgotten by those who had the privilege of hearing him; . . . . and the feeling was current that should a crisis ever arise in the fortunes of this country, he would be the man of action, who ought forthwith to be called to the councils of the nation.[1]

Only the opening passages of this speech can be given, made in response to the toast of his health :—

I will not pretend, gentlemen, to that species of pride which apes humility. I will not say that I am wholly unworthy of your regard, but I will tell you something of the position I hold in the East. Your approval of my conduct is no light condemnation of the conduct of those who have sought by every means, fair or unfair, to blast my reputation, even at the risk of injuring their own; who under the pretence of humanity have screened injustice, and on the plea of enquiry, have been unscrupulous enough to charge murder.

[1] John C. Templar, *Private Letters of the Rajah*, v. iii. p. 117.

It is now but a little more than five years since I was the idol of a spurious popularity; it is more than three years that I have been the object, but happily not the victim, of an unprecedented persecution, and it will afford me no light satisfaction if this night a fair and moderate estimate can be formed of my motives and conduct. Praise and blame have been lavished upon me with no sparing hand. I have been accused of every crime from murder to merchandise. I have been held up as a prodigy of perfection, and I have been cast down as a monster of iniquity. These, gentlemen, are the extremes which human folly delights in; these are the distortions which the tribunes of the people represent as Bible truths to the multitude, these the delusions which a hackneyed politician uses lightly, to wound feelings he has long outlived, and to cast a slur upon Her Majesty's servants. The evil, I fear, is inevitable, but it is no less an evil, that public morals, in such hands, should sink like water to its lowest and dirtiest level.

In replying for the Bench, the Hon. Baron Alderson said:—

I am sorry to say that in one respect I differ from Sir James Brooke and the Chairman, in that they expressed something of regret that our distinguished guest had not the approbation of all mankind. I do not think Sir James Brooke would deserve it if he had it; for I have always observed—and I believe history will confirm me—that the greatest benefactors of the human race have been the most abused in their own time, and I therefore think Sir James Brooke ought to be congratulated *because* he is abused.

In England, especially, it is the case that the little men who bray their philanthropic sentiments on platforms are almost always found in opposition to and decrying those men who are doing mighty deeds for the advancement and happiness of mankind. There exists in narrow minds a mean pleasure in decrying those who tower above them intellectually and morally. They do not blow themselves up to equal the ox, but they spit their poison at him in hopes of bringing him down to their level. And the unfortunate result of the weakness of party government is that the party which is in power is always, or almost always, ready to throw over a great public servant to silence the yelping of the pack that snarl about his heels. It was so with Governor Eyre, it was so with Sir Bartle Frere, it was so with General Gordon, and it was so with Sir Bampfylde

Fuller. "The time will come in our country when no gentleman will serve the public, and your blackguards and your imbeciles may have a monoply of appointments," so in indignant sorrow wrote the Rajah. Though surprised and hurt at what had been said and done, he was not disturbed, and he treated his defamers with contempt and indifference, "conscious of right motives, and firm in right action."[1]

The Rajah left England in April, 1853. On his arrival in Sarawak he was attacked by small-pox. There was no doctor in Kuching at the time, but he was successfully nursed through his illness by his devoted officers, both English and native, amongst the latter being Sherip Matusain, who had lately been recalled from Sekrang in disgrace, and who now became one of his doctors. Prayers for his recovery were nightly offered in the mosque, and Malay houses. Offerings for his recovery were made in the shape of alms by the Indians; and votive oblations were made in their temples by the Chinese. The Rev. A. Horsburgh, who did so much to pull him through his illness, wrote :—

> The joy in Sarawak when all danger was over was very great, for all had been equally distressed, and many fervent prayers in church, mosque, and temple, were offered for his recovery.

But we will here briefly interrupt the sequence of events to give in unbroken record the sequel that happily terminated the unprecedented persecutions which the Rajah was subjected to for over five years, for the miserable fiasco of the Commission, the direct result of these persecutions, left the Rajah's defamers powerless and humiliated, and the Government in a disgraceful dilemma.

The Commission sat in Singapore during the months of September and October, 1854. It consisted of two gentlemen, Mr. C. R. Prinsep, Advocate-General at Calcutta, already afflicted with the mental malady to which he soon after succumbed, and the Hon. Humphrey B. Devereaux, of the Bengal Civil Service. At the first and second meetings, of which due notice had been given, to the surprise of the Commissioners no one appeared to support

[1] *Private Letters.*

the charges contained in the address to Mr. Hume, and subpœnas had to be served on several of the subscribers to that address. As a result, sixteen witnesses were produced in support of these charges, and not one of them deposed to any acts within his own knowledge which negatived the practice of piracy by the Saribas and Sekrangs; three deposed to specific piratical acts of those tribes; and one rather established than controverted their piratical character. On the other hand, twenty-four witnesses called by the Commissioners, with Mr. J. Bondriot,[1] late Resident of Sambas, Dutch Borneo (who volunteered his evidence) deposed expressly to acts of piracy on the part of these people. Traders and nakodas from Borneo, who were present in Singapore, were deterred from coming forward to give evidence by reports disseminated amongst them by the personal opponents of the Rajah that their attendance would lead to detention and inconvenience. The contention that the attacks of the Saribas and Sekrang Dayaks were merely acts of intertribal hostility was not upheld. The charge of wrongful and causeless attack and massacre wholly failed of proof, and was sufficiently negatived.[2] This was the judgment of Mr. Prinseps, and so far his brother Commissioner was with him, for, after dealing with their general character, Mr. Devereaux sums up by saying that the Saribas and Sekrang were piratical, and deserved the punishment they received, and that in conflicts with such men atrocities, in the ordinary sense of the term, are not easily committed.[3] These were the main points which mostly concerned the public, and upon which were based the grave accusations that it had been the pleasure of Mr. Hume and his adherents

[1] The Dutch Resident of Western Borneo, not of Sambas only. He certified that on one raid the Saribas and Sekrangs killed four hundred people on the Dutch coast. Referred to by Earl in his *Eastern Seas*; he relates that the Dayaks swept the whole coast from Sekrang to Sambas, killing the entire population of Selakau. As far back as 1825, the Resident of Sambas (Van Grave) and his secretary were killed on their way to Pontianak in a small vessel. Keppel tells us the Saribas once laid in wait for "the (Dutch) man-of-war schooner *Haai*, and in one engagement killed thirty-seven of the Dutch, losing eighty of their own force." Keppel's book, *A Voyage to the Eastern Archipelago in 1850*, contains an able refutation of the charges made by Hume and Cobden.

[2] The foregoing particulars are taken from Mr. Prinseps' report, dated January 6, 1855.

[3] From Mr. Devereaux's report.

to formulate upon totally inadequate and most unreliable evidence. The other points brought by their instructions to the notice of the Commissioners were matters more between the Crown and the Rajah than of general interest to the public. Whether the position of Sir James Brooke as Rajah of Sarawak was compatible with his duties as British Consul General and Commissioner, and with his character as a British subject; was the Rajah engaged in trade? and whether the Rajah should be entrusted with a discretion to determine which tribes are piratical, and to call for the aid of her Majesty's Naval forces for the punishment of such tribes, were points upon which the Commissioners had to decide, and upon which they differed. They, however, agreed that the Rajah was not engaged in trade, and the other questions, except the involved one of the independence of Sarawak, had been solved by the Rajah's resignation of his appointments under the Crown, which was, however, only accepted late in 1855, long after he had in weariness of spirit ceased to exercise the functions of those offices.

"Upon the question of the independence of Sarawak, Mr. Prinseps found the Rajah's position to be no other than that of a vassal of the Sultan, holding indeed by a tenure very bare, and easy to be thrown off altogether." Mr. Devereaux could give no definite opinion; but it was a question to be submitted only to the highest legal authorities, and the Rajah justly protested against the Commissioners dealing with it; and it is a question that has long since been settled.

One result of this senseless outcry in England against the Rajah was that no help was thenceforth accorded him by the fleet in the China and Straits waters. Were an insurrection to take place; were the Sekrangs and Saribas to send round the calling-out spear and muster their clans, not a marine, not a gun would have been afforded him by her Majesty's Government for his protection, and such was the case during the Chinese insurrection.

An evidence of the confidence felt after the quelling of the pirates was the increase in trade, the tonnage of merchant vessels in 1852 having risen to 25,000 tons, whereas in 1842 the whole trade was carried on by a few native prahus.

Traders were secure along the coast, and, as was testified to before the Commission, the people of Sambas and Pontianak blessed the Rajah for the protection he had given them against the depredations of the piratical Dayaks; and those of Muka and Oya were thankful that he had settled near them—a little later they had more reason to be thankful, when he relieved them of their oppressive rulers. The Singapore *Free Press* in February, 1850, said:—

A few, a very few years ago, no European merchant vessels ventured on the north-west coast of Borneo; now they are numerous and safe. Formerly shipwrecked crews were attacked, robbed, and enslaved; now they are protected, fed, and forwarded to a place of safety. The native trade now passes with careless indifference over the same track between Marudu and Singapore where, but a little while ago, it was liable to the peril of capture; the crews of hundreds of prahus are no longer exposed to the loss of life and the loss of property. The recent successful proceedings on the coast of Borneo have been followed by the submission of the pirate hordes of Saribas and Sekrang.

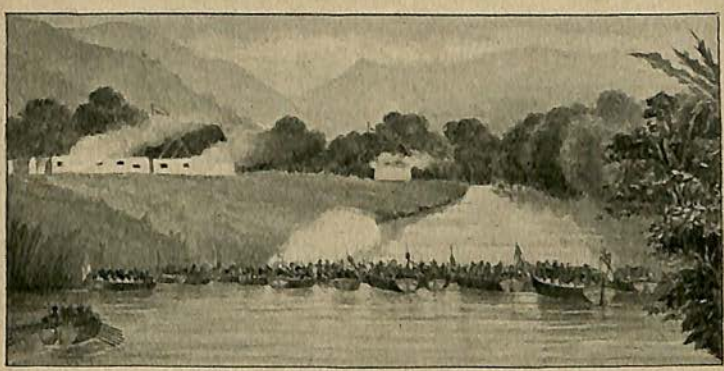
So late as June, 1877, when the Rajah had long been dead, Mr. Gladstone in addressing the House on the question of Turkey and Bulgarian atrocities, and probably as a comparison, said, "I cannot recollect a more shameful proceeding on the part of any country than the slaughter of the Dayaks by Her Majesty's forces and by Sir James Brooke."

Earl Grey and Admiral Farquhar published indignant replies. Mr. Bailie-Cochrane[1] took Mr. Gladstone to task in the House, whereupon the latter shuffled out of what he had said with less than his usual ingenuity, by saying that he never meant to blame the Rajah personally, but only the Government. The following is from Earl Grey's reply:—

The additional information respecting him which I have since gained has only tended to confirm the impression I then received that his character was a truly noble one, and I am sanguine enough to believe that it would be regarded in the same light by yourself if you would be induced to read the letters he addressed to his mother in the early part of his career as Rajah of Sarawak. These, to my mind, most beautiful letters are to be found in the very interesting life of Sir James Brooke published some months ago by Miss Jacob.

[1] Son of the late Admiral Sir Thomas Cochrane.

They were written while the events they describe were going on, to a mother whom he passionately loved, obviously without the remotest idea that they would ever be published, and contain an account, bearing the clearest impress of truth and sincerity of all that he did, and of the feelings and motives by which he was guided. We find in them a touching record of his pity for the oppressed Dayaks,[1] of his righteous indignation against the oppressors, of his noble self-devotion, and of his fixed determination to hazard, and if necessary to sacrifice for their welfare, not only the whole of his moderate fortune, but ease, health, and life itself, while he steadily refused to listen to all attempts that were made to induce him to use the position he had acquired for his own personal advantage.



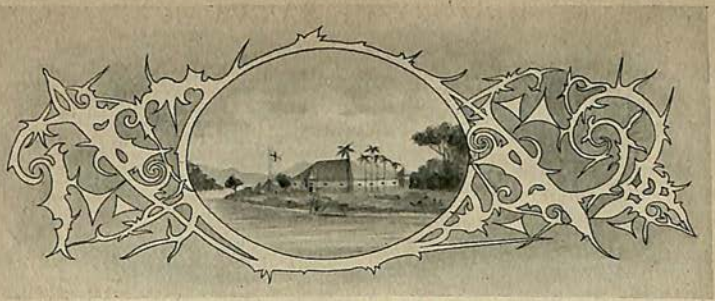
ATTACK ON S. USMAN'S STRONGHOLD.

The Commission had done no serious harm with his own loyal people. They heard with bewilderment that the man on whom their prosperity, and indeed their security, depended, had been maligned in England, and was to be tried as a malefactor in Singapore, and their dread was lest he should be taken from their head, or should throw up his task in disgust, and the country be allowed to relapse into oppression and anarchy ; for so surely as the Rajah left, would the pangirans return and resume their blood-sucking operations on one side, and on the other the pirates recover from their humiliation and recommence their depredations, and so they would perish between the upper and nether millstone.

The Ministry made no attempt to remove the harmful impressions caused by the false step they had so weakly

[1] The Land-Dayaks.

been induced to take; they but confirmed these by making no *amende*, and by withdrawing all support, and as the sequel will show, the Commission paved the way for the rebellion of the Chinese, and for the outbreak of disaffected Malays and other natives, aided and incited by intriguing Brunis, which were to follow, and which cost the lives of many Europeans, and great numbers of Chinese and natives, and nearly resulted in the extinction of the raj. With justice the Rajah wrote: "It is a sad thing to say, but true as sad, that England has been the worst opponent of the progress of Sarawak, and is now the worst enemy of her liberty."



THE TUAN MUDA'S FORT AT SEKRANG.

CHAPTER V

RENTAP

WITH this chapter commences the history of the life of the present Rajah, in itself an epitome of the history of the raj, who in 1852, at the age of twenty-three, obtained two years' leave of absence to try his fortunes in Borneo at the invitation of his uncle the Rajah. He arrived at Kuching on July 21, 1852, at the commencement of a new era in the history of Sarawak. Hitherto the raj extended only as far as the Samarahan river, and within this little state order had been established and peace reigned. Without, it had been freed from its enemies, the result being an increasing trade which brought prosperity. But the Rajah could not

leave incomplete the work that he had undertaken and begun, and these benefits had to be more fully extended to the neighbouring districts, which were shortly to be added to the raj. This could be done only by first reducing to order the turbulent and restless Sea-Dayaks and Malays who inhabited these districts. Sarawak, too, had now been left to fight its own battles alone, and to surmount the additional troubles that had been thrown across its path by the blind and weak policy of the British Government that should have been its protector. In the severe trials that followed, and which had to be faced unhelped, the Rajah found that assistance which he so much needed in the able and devoted support of his nephews, the Tuan Besar, and, more notably, the Tuan Muda, for so the present Rajah was entitled by the datus on his arrival.[1] On the expiration of his leave the Tuan Muda finally quitted the Navy, and Sarawak became the scene of his life-work; he was to become the Rajah's right-hand man, and, a few years later, his trusted deputy.

Charles Anthoni Johnson, the Tuan Muda, was the second son of the Rev. Francis Charles Johnson, and was born on June 3, 1829, at Berrow Vicarage, near Burnham, Somersetshire. Educated in Crewkerne Grammar School for a few years only, he was withdrawn at the age of a little over twelve, and entered the Navy on January 18, 1842, as a volunteer of the first class, under his uncle, Commander Willes Johnson of the sloop *Wolverine*. He served on this ship until June, 1844, gaining two steps as midshipman in that year, when he was transferred to the *Dido*, Captain the Hon. Henry Keppel. He rejoined the *Wolverine*, serving under Commander John Dalrymple Hay,[2] until his transfer to the *Mæander*, Captain the Hon. H. Keppel, in November, 1847, as sub-lieutenant. He joined the *St. Vincent* in 1848, and in June the next year was promoted to be senior mate of the *Terrible*. He became lieutenant in 1852. He served mostly on the China station; and the only active service he saw was with Keppel's expedition and Sir Thomas Cochrane's squadron in Borneo waters, as we have already recorded.

[1] This is now the established title of the second sons of the Rajahs.

[2] Now the Right Hon. Sir John Dalrymple Hay, Bart., P.C.

The Tuan Muda was appointed to Lundu in January, 1853, but he had not been there long before news arrived of the death of Mr. Lee, the Resident at Lingga. The circumstances were these: Ever since the severe lesson taught the Saribas and Sekrangs in 1849, the piratical tribes had been divided into two parties: one that was content to submit to the Government of Sarawak, and abandon its former lawless practices, and the other, consisting of the irreconcilables, the wild and fiery bloods, who loved slaughter and rapine above everything, and who could not be prevailed upon to beat their spears into ploughshares. At their head stood a peculiarly daring and turbulent Dayak chief called Rentap; and these had retreated farther up the country to the head-waters of the Saribas. There Rentap had established a strong stockade on Sadok, a mountain ridge, up the Sungei (River) Lang, which was regarded as an impregnable fastness, for access could not be obtained to it by boat, on account of the rapids, and the country that would have to be traversed by an expedition was covered with dense jungles, and broken up by rugged limestone chains of hills.

The Sekrang pirates could no longer shoot down to the sea in their war prahus, for the forts of Sekrang and Lingga commanded the river, consequently they exerted their mischievous energies in attacking the peaceful Dayaks in their districts, and they were especially irate against those of their own tribe who had submitted to the white man's rule.

Sekrang station under the able management of Mr. Brereton had made great advances, and around the fort a Malay town had sprung up, and there Chinese traders had also established themselves. Mr. Brereton was ably supported by two of the best and most capable Malay chiefs, Pangiran Matali,[1] a Bruni of rank, and Abang Aing,[2] a Matu

[1] Pangiran Matali (Muhammad Ali) was a brave man, honest and faithful. He was a Government chief and magistrate, and his death, a few years ago, was felt as a severe loss. He had a very thorough knowledge of the Dayaks, and was a capable man in handling them. He was a prince by birth of the royal blood of Bruni. He stands out as an example of what such princes were capable of becoming under a just government.

[2] Abang Aing was the head Government chief and native magistrate at Sekrang, a post he held with distinction, noted for his fair and impartial judgments, till his death, which took place in December, 1884. He and Pangiran Matali were the present Rajah's main supporters and most trusted servants in the old troublesome days;

Melanau, who had long been settled in the Batang Lupar with his father the Laksamana Menudin, and who had the good fortune to have for a helpmate an upright and determined woman, Dayang Kota; she was strong in council, and so trustworthy that when Mr. Brereton and the chiefs were away she was often left in charge of the fort.

The fort at Lingga had been built in 1852 to protect that river against marauding bands of Saribas, and had been placed in charge of Mr. Alan Lee.

Brereton and Lee were both men of independent means, who had joined the Rajah to assist him in his great work, and who never drew a penny from the Sarawak Government. The former was hot and impetuous; both were men of noble and generous natures.

The position of Mr. Lee at Lingga was fairly safe. He had been for a short time coadjutor with Brereton at Sekrang; at Lingga he had plenty of Malays, and only friendly Dayaks, the Balaus, about him. But Mr. Brereton was in a more dangerous position, a single Englishman among many thousand natives but partially reclaimed in hardly five years, and all passionately attached to their ancestral custom of head-hunting. It is true he had about him a number of Malays, and on an emergency might call in the assistance of those Dayaks of the Sekrang tribe who professed allegiance, but many of these were waverers, and on a few only could any reliance be placed.

Early in 1853, reports reached Brereton that Rentap, at the head of a war party, was on his way down the river to attack his fort, and force an opening to the sea, so that again he might pursue his piratical expeditions along the coast; and Brereton sent a message to Lee at Lingga to come to his assistance.

The request was at once complied with, and, thinking the case urgent, Lee hurried up the river with a scratch party, insufficiently armed; but he left orders that a large force was to follow with all possible speed.

On reaching Sekrang, Lee learned that the force under

and their names stand foremost amongst those Malay chiefs who won an honourable place in the annals of Sarawak for devotion to the cause of law and order.

Rentap was approaching, and he strongly urged Brereton to stand solely on the defensive, and not to attack the enemy till his auxiliaries had arrived. Brereton, however, had built a small stockade a few miles above Sekrang fort, and to this he insisted on going, and was accompanied by Lee. On the morning after reaching it, a few boats of the Sekrang pirates were seen descending the river and approaching the stockade. A gun was fired to signal them to desist, but as this was disregarded, a charge of grape was poured into them, throwing them apparently into confusion. Unfortunately, the Malays in the fort were not to be restrained, and Brereton was for at once dashing forth to attack the enemy in the open on the river. Lee saw the injudiciousness of such a proceeding. He was convinced that the two prahus had been sent forward tentatively, and that the main body of the enemy was concealed behind the point of land farther up. He expostulated with Brereton, who taunted him with a lack of courage, and then left the fort with his Malays, and in their boats they ran in upon the main fleet that was lurking in an upper reach, and which now swung down, assisted by the ebb-tide, on Brereton's light prahus.

Lee, nettled at the taunt, and seeing the peril in which his friend and fellow-officer had so inconsiderately placed himself, at once left the fort and hastened to his assistance.

The small boats in which were the Malay garrison were being swamped by the heavy bangkongs or war prahus of the Sekrangs filled with armed men. Brereton's boat upset, and with difficulty he reached the bank. Lee refused to retreat, and calling out, "Save yourselves, I must stand," dashed on. His boat was boarded by the enemy; he fought with desperation, but was overpowered and fell into the water with his head nearly severed from his shoulders. Meanwhile the force of the current had carried the fleet under the guns of the stockade, and these opened fire upon it, and compelled Rentap reluctantly to withdraw and abandon his undertaking.[1] He was followed up and attacked by the Sekrang Dayak chief Gasing, who, acting

[1] S. St. John, in his *Life of Sir James Brooke*, says that Rentap took Lee's head, but this was not the case.

on his own initiative, burnt twenty villages belonging to Rentap's followers.

When the news of this disaster reached Kuching, the Tuan Muda was recalled from Lundu and ordered to replace Lee at Lingga, and he arrived there in June, 1853. A stronger fort was now built there, and the Malays living at Banting were ordered to move down. He was succeeded at Lundu by Mr. Charles Grant.[1]

Lingga, which is just at the mouth of the river of that name that flows into the Batang Lupar about sixteen miles above its mouth, is seated on a mud bank; the land for miles around is a dismal swamp, and is the most dreary station in the State. It is, however, a healthy place, and another redeeming point is the fine expanse of water which forms the estuary of the Bantag Lupar, stretching from Lingga, where it is three miles broad, straight to the mouth.

The Dayak population of the Lingga river was then about 5000, all Balaus, whom the Tuan Muda found to be "braver than most Dayaks, and true-hearted." From the first, they and the Seboyaus, a relative tribe, residing some at Seboyau, below Lingga, but most at Lundu, had sided with the Rajah against their direst foes, the Saribas; and these pages record many great services rendered by them. Besides these Dayaks there was a considerable number of Malays; and the latter increased, for Lingga became to them a place of refuge.

Indra Lila[2] had been the chief here since his forced departure from the Rejang (see footnote, p. 16). He had died a few months before, and had been succeeded by his brother, Lila Pelawan,[2] who died a centenarian in 1897. There was another brother, Lila Wangsa,[2] who had joined the piratical Saribas Malays. Lila Pelawan was only the nominal chief of the river, for it was really ruled by two despotic old Malay ladies of rank, Dang Isa and Dang Ajar.

[1] Mr. C. Grant of Kilgraston, N.B., was a midshipman on the *Mæander* when that ship brought the Rajah out from England. He became the Rajah's private secretary in September, 1848. He retired in 1863.

[2] These are titles of Sanskrit origin bestowed by the Sultan, the meanings of which are somewhat obscure. The first probably means "the revered Lord"; the third "high in eminence"; as regards the second, Pelawan may mean the name of a place, otherwise it is untranslatable.

These sisters claimed all the land as their inheritance, and all the dwellers thereon as their slaves. Though they were cruel and tyrannical in their methods, these masterful old ladies had the redeeming point of being brave, and, attired in men's clothing, with sword and spear, had often led the men in resisting the attacks of the Saribas. Dang Ajar was the most troublesome. It was she with whom the Kayan chief, Akam Nipa, had fallen in love, and a pity it was that his threat to abduct her was frustrated by the flight of the Malays from Ngmah. Though professing a strong regard for the Tuan Muda, whom they honoured by styling him their son, they feared and hated him, for they saw that he would soon deprive them of all power to do evil, and to prevent this they even attempted to resort to poison. This was the method by which they were commonly reputed to have removed Indra Lila out of their way, as they would certainly have done to his little son, so as to acquire his inheritance, had not the Tuan Muda taken him under his protection. This lad was Abang Abdul Gani, who became the Tuan Muda's constant follower for years, and who afterwards gained for himself the reputation of being one of the bravest and most honest of the Government Malay officials.

As they themselves foresaw, the power of these two old ladies was soon brought to an end, and they retired into seclusion to solace themselves with religion.

In August, 1853, the Rajah went to Bruni, where he found that his power and his popularity had not waned, though discarded by the British Government, and discredited by his own countrymen, and though he arrived in a small merchant ship instead of in one of her Majesty's men-of-war. He stayed some time in Bruni, and was warmly received by the new Sultan, Abdul Mumin, for Omar Ali had departed to answer for his sins, "and was fully and firmly reinstated as their friend and adviser." Those districts outside Sarawak, namely the Sadong, Batang Lupar, Saribas, and Kalaka rivers and their tributaries, with a coast-line of some seventy-five miles, in area about three times the size of the raj, were now incorporated with it by a cession granted by the Sultan, the Rajah agreeing to pay the

Sultan half of any surplus revenues that might accrue. We may note here for convenience that this was altered afterwards in 1861, when the territories as far as Kedurong point were ceded, thereby giving the State a further coast-line of 180 miles, and the rivers Rejang, Oya, Muka, Tatau, and Bintulu. For this additional cession and that of 1853 a fixed yearly sum was to be paid to the Sultan as compensation for loss of revenue; and these cessions, having been made subsequent to the treaty of 1847, contain a clause to the effect that none of the districts ceded by them may be transferred by the Rajah or his successors to any other government, company or, persons without the sanction of the British Government, but the Sultan's sanction is not required. In the event of the cession money not being paid for three consecutive years, the districts ceded would revert to the Sultan; otherwise the sovereign and territorial rights over these districts are absolutely invested in the Rajahs of Sarawak, the Sultan having reserved no rights or power whatever over them. The cessions subsequently obtained by the present Rajah, which will be noted in their proper places, were granted on the same terms.

In December, the Rajah arrived at Lingga on his way to Sekrang and farther up the river, with the object of opening up communication with the turbulent members of the Dayak tribes in the interior, under Rentap and Bulan. These chiefs were men of very different character, and headed native bodies of like diversity.

Rentap was an active, crafty, and determined man, rootedly opposed to the interference of Europeans and the putting down of piracy and head-hunting. On the other hand, Bulan was the figure-head of a party that hesitated, uncertain which direction affairs would take, and watching to see which way the cat jumped. Bulan and his faction would not engage in active hostility against the Rajah's government, unless they saw that the tide of affairs was setting strong against it. But also they would not profess friendship, or lend help against the turbulent party.

The Tuan Muda attended the Rajah to Sekrang, and several meetings were contrived with the leaders of the two

factions, but with no satisfactory results. In April, 1854, owing to the representations of Mr. Brereton, an expedition was organised against a chief called Apai[1] Dendang at Dandi, on the backbone or watershed between the Saribas and the Sekrang river, a hotbed of mischief, whence several incursions had been made into the pacified country, with the usual results of rapine and murder.

The Tuan Muda brought up a contingent from Lingga, and this, united with a force from Kuching, proceeded up the Sekrang, passing troublesome and dangerous rapids, till the point Lipat was reached, where the boats had to be left. The backbone of hills was at some considerable distance, and to reach it much thorny jungle had to be traversed. After a day's march inland it was arranged that the Europeans and the Sarawak Malay contingent should remain behind, and that a fighting division of Dayaks should be sent forward under their chiefs to attack Dandi, which consisted of one long Dayak house. The plan adopted was not the most judicious, and the result was disappointing. We will describe what followed in the Tuan Muda's own words.

Late in the afternoon of the third day, when we anxiously awaited the return of the advanced division, our outposts first of all descried two or three small parties of Dayaks evidently of our force, wending their way slowly over hill and dale. On their nearer approach, we plainly saw wounded men carried by them. Whispers spread—gradually and quietly at first, but they soon became more distinct—that our party had failed. In the evening the chiefs arrived and came forward to report progress, looking haggard, thin, and exhausted. The story was as follows—they had walked at a fast pace the whole of the first day over the steepest hills, sometimes without any path, and the guides at a nonplus for the proper direction; from morning till night they scarcely halted, under a scorching sun; and parched with thirst without any hope of water. At night, by moonlight, they pushed on again, until they nearly fell from exhaustion, when they slept in any position with their arms on. About 3 A.M. they again advanced, and, at the opening of dawn, the most active Dayaks, reaching the enemy's house, advanced upon it without order, and as the leaders were mounting the ladder, they were struck off one after another by

[1] Apai = the father of.

hundreds of men inside, dressed in fighting costumes, and headed by the whole of the Saribas tribe, men heretofore on every occasion on land, victorious. Our poor leaders had to retire to guard their wounded and dying, while the enemy were yelling, cheering, and beating gongs; and even their women, dressed in their best clothes, were clapping their hands, and urging their sweethearts to the encounter.

As the sun rose, some of the strongest of the Malay force came up within shot, and took up quarters behind trees and opened fire upon the house. This stopped the cheering within, but in no way daunted the enemy. About an hour after, our elderly chiefs came up, viewed the house of the enemy, sat down on the hillside in a sheltered position, and were so exhausted that children might have hacked their heads off. They stopped all advance of their party, and while the oldest chiefs were suffering severely from fatigue, a palaver was opened, the result being that some of the enemy came down, mixed with our people, then partook of sirih and betel-nut in a friendly manner, and promised to show our party the nearest way back, and provide them with provisions for their journey. On their part they engaged to be answerable for the payment of a "death fine" for the men they had killed some months previously.

News that a large expedition had been organised against Dandi had reached Apai Dendang before the departure of the force from Sekrang, and he had summoned to his assistance all the bravest men of the Saribas tribe, and the principal leaders of every head-hunting expedition for some time past; nevertheless he was unwilling to drive matters to an extremity, having a wholesome dread of the white men. This rendered him ready to treat and buy off the expedition with a promise of indemnity for murders recently committed.

A fatal want of discretion had been shown in the whole affair, no trustworthy guides had been engaged, no inquiry made as to whether the Saribas were coming up to the succour of Apai Dendang, no English leaders were sent forward with the rabble of assailants, and that rabble had attacked in straggling detachments, when exhausted with hard marching and with thirst.

We returned home with feelings that can be better imagined than described. The Dayaks said that the omens had been bad from the outset; the Malays said if they had only been there,

the result would have been different; and the Europeans said—nothing.

In August, 1854, the Rajah arrived at Lingga with a large force which had been collected at Kuching, and proceeded to Sekrang, taking with him the Tuan Muda; The Tuan Besar, together with other European officers, who had come with the Rajah, also lent their aid. The object was to attack Rentap in his fastness in Sungei Lang. The whole force numbered 7000 Malays and Dayaks. To prevent the Saribas from sending their fighting men to the assistance of Rentap, the Datu Temanggong was despatched with a flotilla up that river to menace their villages and to hold the Saribas warriors in check. Mr. Steele[1] was to lead another party up the Kanowit to threaten the Dayaks of that river and its branches the Kajulau and Entabai, with a rear attack should they cross over to the Saribas. Mr. Steele had been thrice attacked at Kanowit fort, but now he could muster fifteen hundred men and take the offensive, and, though possibly he would have to do no fighting, his force would deter the Kajulaus from sending aid to Rentap. The expedition was thoroughly well thought out.

The Rajah, with the main body, leaving the Sekrang fort, ascended the river for about thirty miles to a place called Entaban. The heavy prahus were brought thus far with great difficulty, owing to the rapids, and beyond that point it was impossible to proceed in them. Accordingly a stockade was erected, and the Tuan Besar was placed in command of the expedition by land to Sungei Lang, with his brother, the Tuan Muda, Mr. Crookshank, Mr. Brereton, and four other English officers to assist. The Rajah's health would not admit of his undertaking the arduous march. He remained behind with a strong force to protect the flotilla.

Although the heavy war boats could ascend no farther, it was possible for part of the force to continue the ascent of the river in light boats, and this was done, the Europeans and Malays marching.

[1] As in the case of Mr. Lee, little has been recorded of Mr. H. Steele. He did good service at the battle of Beting Maru, and probably joined in 1848. He was selected by the Rajah to take charge of the fort at Kanowit when it was built, and there he was murdered in 1859. He was a noted linguist.

To continue the narrative from the Tuan Muda's description :—

We had Dayak guides, and could not have proceeded without them. Our land force consisted mostly of Malays, and numbered about 500 men—the Sekrang Dayaks were in their boats. About 4 P.M. we halted on the brink of the river and prepared to spend the night with a stockade around. This was in the enemy's country, although there were many people living near who were neither the one thing nor the other. The following morning we proceeded again in the same order, but before midday many of our party were quite exhausted, and there was really no road to follow but the muddy banks of the river, so we halted, and after our midday meal it was decided that we were all to crowd in with the floating force. And thus we pushed on, but in a most comfortless condition with regard to space. We spent the night at Tabbat, and fortified ourselves here also. My subsequent experience of the localities has proved that we should never have reached our destination on foot, keeping company with the boats. On the fourth day we spied the enemy's position, situated on a hill cleared of all old jungle and showing recent preparations of defence around their dwellings. Our heavy armament consisted of 4- and 3-pounder guns and rocket tubes.

The enemy showed no opposition outside, and after marching about four miles, we arrived at a hill in their vicinity. It was a fiery hot morning without a cloud, and the hills, though low, were very precipitous. The Europeans kept near the guns, to assist in their progress up the steeps, and when we were mounting the last rising ground on which the enemy was fortified, we found some of the leaders of our force had foolishly advanced too near, and a few had been killed and wounded, and were now being carried to the rear. The enemy had two long houses on the ridge of a hill, surrounded by steep ground excepting at the end. Here high stakes were driven into the earth, and around all a firm and thick stockade. The 4-pounder gun was mounted after considerable delay, and, when the rocket tube was in place, we opened fire on one end, while the 3-pounder played away on the other. The enemy answered our fire pretty briskly with their lelahs.[1] We could see the men rushing to and fro covered with their shields, also parties dancing to the music of the gongs. Some of their voices we heard distinctly, saying they would never succumb to the tight-breeched men (white men) or to any other strangers. Mr. Crookshank (at considerable risk) took charge of the rockets, which were of ancient make, and a few that were fired entered the fort and did great execution, but the majority whizzed round and round and sometimes

[1] Brass cannon of Malay manufacture.

lodged in the ground among our own party; we were all more afraid of these missiles than anything the enemy could produce. Early in the afternoon there was a commotion among the enemy, and we could discern women and children leaving on the opposite side of the hill, but the men stood fast and kept their posts.

Our old Penglima[1] was biding his time, for he yet knew that he might lead, but others would not follow. He worked steadily and quietly, amid many jeers from some of our own native party, who asked why the warrior did not make an advance: his reply between his teeth was—"Your words are more than your deeds." As the sun drew near to the horizon, the Penglima moved up to the enemy's stockade, silently opened the palisade, and, after a moment's peep, jumped in, followed by others, who gave a loud cheer and drew their swords. The enemy, finding a lodgment had been made inside, immediately took to their heels and fled down the hill. We followed in close to the leaders; the entrance was so narrow that many received contusions when passing through. About fifty or sixty of the enemy were tearing away over the open ground, covering their bodies with their shields.

These were followed by all the defenders of the stockade, who rolled down the side of the hill, a living wave, bearing away with them their chief Rentap, who had been wounded. The stockade was taken, and within its defences the victors passed the night, whilst the enemy fled precipitately to a second and still stronger fastness on the summit of the mountain Sadok, which loomed in the distance. One of the most curious and significant features of the conflict was that, whilst it was in progress, the hills and every commanding position around were crowded with Dayaks, the adherents of Bulan, as well as others, who watched it with lively interest, taking no part on one side or the other, but waiting to see to which side the scale would incline. Had the attacking force met with discomfiture, these men would have fallen on it and harassed the party as it retreated.

If, after the defeat of Rentap and the capture of the stockade in the Lang, they did not tender allegiance to the Government, it was because the expedition retired immediately after having achieved its first success, and, therefore, it

[1] Seman was a Kalaka Malay living in Kuching, and had been made a penglima by the Rajah for his courage and dash. His name still survives in Kampong Penglima Seman—the village, or parish, of Penglima Seman, within the township of Kuching.

gave the waverers no permanent assurance of protection against Rentap's resentment.

To have crushed Rentap, it would have been necessary to have pursued him to his second stronghold at Sadok, but this was not done. Captain Brooke in command doubtless saw the expediency of following up a routed foe, but Dayak warriors are wont to rest content with a single victory, and, that gained, to become uncontrollably impatient to return home; besides, the force was in too disturbed a state to undertake any organised attack; accordingly, after making a circuit of devastation, it returned.

The result was that Rentap continued to give trouble for seven years.

Brereton died of dysentery, brought on by exposure, shortly after this expedition, and the Tuan Muda was placed in charge of the Batang Lupar in October, 1854. The district was in a very disturbed state, and to establish order by putting an end to intertribal feuds and promiscuous head-hunting required an unceasing watch being kept on all, and necessitated many punitive expeditions being made. The Tuan Muda had but a handful of fortmen, for there was no money to spend; not more than £30 per mensem being allowed even so late as 1860 for the upkeep of the district, and it must have been less then. Little support could be expected from the capital. On the Kajulau expedition the Tuan Muda could muster no more than 100 antiquated muskets and a few rifles, which included twelve flint and six percussion muskets, all that could be spared from Kuching. There was much to be done, but there was deficiency of means to do the work. The Rajah's advice to him was: "to encourage the good, intimidate the bad, and confirm the wavering." The difficulties were so many, and the means at hand so limited, that the position would have been hopeless except to a man of great tact, patience, daring, and untiring activity, able to bear all the responsibility, all the anxiety, and all the work upon his own shoulders. It must be borne in mind that Kuching was some 125 miles away, that those were the days when there were no steamers, and that during the north-east monsoon navigation was dangerous to boats.

How the Tuan Muda succeeded will be told in this record of his career; here it will be sufficient to say, quoting the late Rajah, "that he was the right man in the right place, and that we are all children in Dayak management compared to him."

In 1856, the Tuan Muda writes (in *Ten Years in Sarawak*):—

> We are almost daily having alarms in one place or another; sometimes on water and sometimes on land. And upon one side of the whole length of the river, the inhabitants dare not farm or live, fearing attacks from the interior of Sekrang and Saribas. Small parties make their foraging excursions and run away with a head here and there, and are far distant before we can follow them up.

Intertribal feuds, which had been more or less dropped in the common cause of piracy—and the plethora of heads it afforded—had now broken out again, and were growing in intensity. Besides these troubles in the Batang Lupar and Saribas, the Dayaks of the Rejang living on the Serikei and Kajulau rivers were giving considerable trouble. These Dayaks had moved over from the Sekrang and Saribas and were hand-in-glove with Rentap's rebels. They were open and declared enemies of the Government. The Kajulau was considered to be the centre of the enemy's country, and also to be inaccessible to attack. Confident in their impunity, they were becoming a terror to the peaceable inhabitants of the Rejang delta, so the Tuan Muda determined to attack them, and organised an expedition—the first to act independently of Kuching assistance, except for the loan of the dozen old muskets above mentioned.

On June 6, 1856, the force, comprising a few Malays, and some 3000 Dayaks, started. To take the enemy by surprise the Tuan Muda decided to go up the Kalaka and march overland. Though the Malays of this river had suffered severely at the hands of the Kajulaus, they at first refused to accompany the expedition, regarding the difficulties as insuperable, and the danger as overwhelming. The result was that half the Malay force the Tuan Muda had brought with him were intimidated, and began to cry off; but Abang Aing restored their confidence, and shamed the

Kalakas into accompanying the expedition. On the 14th, after having encountered great difficulties in passing the rapids, the force reached the Budu stream, and here the boats were left, but as there were enemies ahead and enemies to the right (the Saribas) a strong stockade was erected and garrisoned, to serve as a base and to guard the rear. Near this base were two long Dayak houses, and in one of them was staying a notorious Saribas Dayak chief named Saji. As the people were not declared enemies, though very doubtful friends, Saji could not be touched, but he remained a danger to be reckoned with, and against whom precautions had to be taken, for as soon as the expedition started overland he would be able to follow it with hundreds of men. But Saji was cautious. He preferred to wait to make his attack till the return of the expedition, when it would be easier to surprise, for, if not defeated, it would probably be disorganised. The march commenced on the 16th. The bala formed in three columns with the Malays in the centre, and at evening the tawaks (gongs) of the enemy could be heard in the distance sounding the alarm. But it was not until the 18th, after a tedious march over hilly land, that the verge of the enemy's country was reached. At 3 P.M. a sharp encounter took place, and the enemy were driven off, leaving a few dead on the field, and several long houses that had been abandoned in haste were entered and plundered. One of these houses the Tuan Muda occupied; and, finding that the enemy, taken by surprise, attempted no attack and offered no organised resistance, the force was divided up and despatched in different directions under their own leaders to burn and destroy.

Here an episode occurred which nearly proved disastrous. On the afternoon of the 19th, an attack was expected, and the house occupied by the Tuan Muda was greatly crowded with warriors to defend it. At 7 o'clock it was observed that the posts supporting the house were sloping considerably, and it was found that this had been caused by the Dayaks having stowed away in it overmuch of their heavy plunder, such as brass guns, jars, and gongs, and hundreds had gone up into the house, though by custom they ought to have remained without on the

ground. A collapse would have meant the loss of many lives, and would have been taken advantage of by the watchful enemy. Upon the insistance of Abang Aing, the Tuan Muda left the house, and the Malays were directed to turn the Dayaks out instantly. But this was by no means easy to be done; indeed the Dayaks resisted being made to evacuate the house and leave their plunder there.

Whilst the Tuan Muda was sitting out in the moonlight, a sudden din and the sounds of strife arose from the house. Men came flying down the ladder, and others hurried up it. Then three Balau Dayak chiefs begged the Tuan Muda to go up immediately. Against the protests of Abang Aing, with sword and gun in hand, he ascended, and found Dayaks and Malays in a heated and dangerous condition, opposed to one another with drawn swords in their hands. Planting himself between the antagonists, the Tuan Muda ordered silence, and cocking his double-barrelled gun and placing the muzzle within two inches of the leading Dayak's head, he ordered him to leave the house. Amidst a dead silence the chief went, followed by the Tuan Muda, the Dayaks edging away and making a path for them along the verandah to the ladder. Thus ended the disturbance, and by the morrow it was forgotten. It was arrested just in time to prevent a desperate encounter between the Malays and Dayaks, which would have been taken up by the other Dayak factions—for in the bala were Dayaks of different tribes, only held together by the controlling influence of their white chief—and there would have been fighting among themselves. The enemy, taking advantage of this, would have fallen upon and routed them, and the survivors flying to regain the boats would have been cut off by Saji and his Saribas. The power of the Government among the Sea-Dayaks would have been broken completely, and it would have taken many years to recover it, a calamity which was averted by the bold and prompt action of the Tuan Muda, and his personal power over Malays and Dayaks alike.

On the 20th, the attacking parties returned after having destroyed twenty-five villages, and having secured an immense amount of plunder. There were but few killed

on either side; the enemy had given way, cowed, and had offered but little resistance.

Thus was a severe lesson administered to the Sea-Dayaks, which they never forgot, and it showed them that they could and would be treated even as they had so long treated others with impunity.

"There is no way," wrote the Tuan Muda, "but burning them out of house and home—dreadful as this may appear. The women too must suffer, for they are the principal inciters of these bloody exploits.[1] An attack on a Dayak force, the destruction of the whole of it, with the lives of the men, is no permanent advancement towards cessation of head-taking. But the burning down of a village, loss of goods, old relics, such as heads, arms, and jars,[2] and putting the inhabitants, male and female, to excessive inconvenience—all this fills them with fear and makes them think of the consequences of taking the heads of strangers. These inland abodes have been and are everlasting fastnesses in their imagination. Besides, they always express very freely their opinion of white men; 'they are powerful, having arms and ships at sea, but it is only we Dayaks who can walk and fight on land and clamber steep mountains.'"

On the 21st, the march home was commenced, the leaders in the advance becoming now the rearmost. These were the most trusted and bravest chiefs; conspicuous among them was Pangiran Matali. Their instructions were positive —to keep a sharp look-out for the enemy, and to permit no one to lag behind. Most of the Dayaks were heavily laden with plunder, and the enemy was hovering about their track in the hope of cutting off the stragglers.

On the return to the stockade:

A delicious bathe, and some wine and water were the first things to have. Then a lounge in the boat in thin clothing, with that exhilarating feeling of lightness which one experiences after a Turkish bath. During my enjoyment in the satisfaction that our trials were well-nigh over, a rush was heard with tumultuous yells, and armed people were dashing back over the path by which we had

[1] The brutal and disgusting behaviour of the women on the arrival of a fresh "trophy," to one who has witnessed it, would choke off any pity for them.

[2] These articles and other valuables, though a bitter loss, can be replaced. But the destruction of their homes, rice-stores and standing crops, household goods, cooking utensils and clothing, pigs, poultry, and hunting dogs, boats and paddles, and farming implements are losses that it takes two years to regain, and which reduces them for the time to a condition of beggary.

come. I soon learnt that "Iron Anchor"[1] and Pangiran Matali had been attacked in the rear, and within five minutes two Dayaks rushed to my boat carrying a head yet gory and dripping. The yells and cheers were deafening, and it was some time before I could get the particulars of what had happened. After the noise had somewhat subsided "Iron Anchor" and the Pangiran came to me and told me that as they were marching and bringing up the rear, about three miles off, a party of Dayaks came down the hill close to them. The Pangiran hailed and asked them who they were; the answer was, "We are of one bala (force)." Our party hailed again and then fired. Two of the strangers fell dead, the others took to flight. On Sandom[2] following them up, he saw Saji with a large party fully armed for the purpose of making an onslaught on our rear. The Pangiran fortunately could recognize the Dayak tribes, and well knew their craft and different costumes. Our party escaped unhurt, and Saji, who had, I subsequently was told, vaunted that he would get forty of our heads, mine amongst the number, ran for his life, leaving two dead behind him.

In February, 1857, the Tuan Muda received the startling news that the Chinese had risen and fallen upon Kuching. He was told that the Rajah had been killed, along with Mr. Crookshank and many other Europeans. Before ten minutes had passed, Sekrang fort was crowded with armed men breathing vengeance, and within an hour, boats had been launched and the Tuan Muda with Abang Aing had started. Below Lingga next morning they met the vessel bearing the English refugees—the Bishop, his family, and others, and from them the Tuan Muda learnt the glad tidings of the Rajah's safety. Knowing that his force would be sufficient to crush the rebels and re-establish the Rajah's rule, he pushed on with his mind now more at ease. He arrived at Kuching to find the town in ruins, but the Rajah in charge again on board the Borneo Company's steamer *Sir James Brooke*. As a full account of the insurrection and of the subsequent events will be found in the following chapter, we will now return to the subject of this one to preserve a continuous record of the events that led to the downfall of Rentap.

[1] Sauh Besi, a powerfully built Malay.

[2] Sandom was the guide. He was a plucky Sekrang Dayak, and thirsted for Rentap's blood in revenge for the murder of his brother, who had been put to a cruel death by Rentap.

On the afternoon of the Tuan Muda's return from Kuching, after an arduous time driving the Chinese rebels over the border, he received information that the notorious Saji was out with a head-hunting party along the coast. Prompt action was necessary, and the Tuan Muda by sunset had started in his war-boat, leaving Abang Aing and the Malays to follow. Whilst waiting inside the mouth of the Ludam, a little stream half-way between the mouths of the Batang Lupar and Saribas, for his Malay and Dayak contingents, a boat dashed past towards the Saribas. This the Tuan Muda subsequently learnt was Saji, who off Lingga had fallen in with a small boat containing a man, his wife, and their daughter. Feigning friendliness Saji approached, and when near enough attacked the little party. The man escaped by taking to the water, his wife was cut down and her head taken, and the girl was captured. When passing the Ludam Saji had noticed the Tuan Muda's boat-flag over the bank, the tide being high, and he sat with his drawn sword across the girl's throat prepared to take her life immediately if she attempted to call out, or should any notice be taken of them. On being joined by the Malays and the Balau Dayaks the coast was patrolled, and the Saribas was searched for some way up, but the head-hunters had retired.

Sadok, Rentap's stronghold, was regarded by the Dayaks as impregnable. Since the destruction of the stockaded village at Sungei Lang, he had strengthened his position there. In legend and song the Dayaks represented this place as a mountain so inaccessible, and so protected by magic, that no enemy would ever dare to assail it. Rentap had gathered about him all the disaffected Sekrang Dayaks and some of the Saribas of the interior, who offered him aid so long as he occupied this eyrie, which stood as an unapproachable nucleus and basis far removed from danger, and to which they might all retire in case of need from the rule of the white man, that thwarted their head-hunting and marauding propensities. Rentap was entitled the Inland Rajah, and was the centre of all opposition to the rule of the Rajah of Sarawak. His fortification was near 5000 feet above the sea, with precipitous approaches on almost every side.

The Tuan Muda had obtained permission to undertake another expedition against this stronghold. His intention was to pass over the mountain, lay waste the country at the head of the Saribas, and, after so cutting off Rentap's supplies and reinforcements, to attempt the chief's position on his return.

In the Saribas, which was still a hornet's nest, affairs were coming to a head. The Dayaks were about to retire into the interior with the Datu Patinggi of Saribas, who, together with the Laksamana, was encouraging the Dayaks to continue in their evil courses. But for the Malays, and even amongst them there were many inclined to a life of peace, though these were in a minority, the Dayaks of the lower Saribas would have submitted to the Government, and amongst the latter the Rajah could now count many adherents; but the power of the evilly disposed Malay chiefs, headed by the Patinggi, and of the Dayak chiefs, headed by Rentap, was dominant in the Saribas. To check them the Rajah took a large force to that river, and went at the time that the Tuan Muda was starting on his expedition, so as to disguise the object of the latter's preparations, by leading the people to suppose that his intention was to support the Rajah; and to be at hand to attack the Saribas Dayaks in rear should they muster in force to assist Rentap. The Tuan Besar at the same time went to the Rejang, to hold the Dayaks of that river in check.

The Tuan Muda took no Europeans with him, fearing that the fatigue of the difficult overland march might knock them up, and cause them to become encumbrances; his force consisted of 3500 Dayaks, and 500 Malays, all willing volunteers, though many conceived the task to be beyond their powers; but where he went they were ready to follow, confident that under his direction they would be well led.

The expedition started on June 2, 1857, a little over three months after the Chinese insurrection, and left Sekrang in drizzling rain; throughout it encountered miserable weather, which damped the ardour of the force. The Malays especially cannot endure wet, a few days' exposure brings on fever and ague, and the cold, to which the

Dayaks would be exposed on the mountain, was likely to so numb them as to render them useless.

Old Sandom was once more the guide. He had his personal wrong to avenge, as we have already stated. "Iron Anchor" and Pangiran Matali were again the leaders.

On June 5, the boats were drawn up at Sungei Antu, on a little island of rubble and brushwood, upon which a stockade was erected, and where the flotilla was to be left. Forty men, well armed, were deputed to take charge of the boats and baggage in this extemporised fort, whilst the rest moved overland in the direction of the mountain. On the 7th of June, a height, the bold ridge on which the enemy had established himself, came in sight, with a succession of hills intervening like a chopping sea turned to rock. It was resolved to push on that day to Rapu, the northern termination of the mountain, and there to establish a stockade from which parties might descend and devastate the country of the hostile Saribas, on which Rentap had to depend for supplies. But it was not found possible to do in one day what was determined. The mountain was indeed reached, but ascended only by some of the advance party of Dayaks, who could not be restrained, and who scrambled up the side to the summit of the hogs-back, to be driven back with great loss, not of lives only, but of confidence and courage as well. The bulk of the force was constrained to bivouac in rain and cold on the mountain flank.

The last hundred yards were almost perpendicular, and when mounting I had to pull myself up with one hand by the stunted trees; added to this, there was a declivity of thousands of feet on each side. In ascending this part not more than twenty men were with me. My best fort-man was wounded by a spear, and to assist him many of the others had left me. And now I must give credit to the Lingga people, for they were close at hand. I was within about five yards of the enemy, who were pitching spears from behind some wood on the brow of the hill, while we were underneath, and the spears went flying over my head and struck some of our party in the rear. Here I stood propped up against a tree, and poured thirty rounds from my smooth bore as fast as I could load. After this I tried to ascend, but the Linggas literally collared me.

The enemy were quieted, so here we sat on the side of this hill, at an angle of 80°, the whole night. A few cross sticks were placed for me to sit on. One man held a shield at my back.

When morning broke the Tuan Muda and his followers succeeded in reaching the summit of the mountain, and could look along the brow to the opposite end, where stood the stronghold of the redoubtable Rentap, to which the enemy had retired. Several of the attacking force had been killed or wounded on the previous day, and over a hundred had rolled down the steep sides, and in so doing lost arms and ammunition.

The "Iron Anchor" maintained his position manfully, and well merited his name.

On that day, June 8, the force proceeded to stockade the position gained at the Rapu end of the mountain, confronting that occupied by the fortress of Rentap, which was not above four hundred yards off. This latter was a formidable stockade of iron-wood, impervious to rifle shots, with precipices to the right and left; and the stockade was commanded by the high-placed houses inside, from which volleys could be poured on an attacking army, that must advance in a narrow file along the backbone of rock leading to it. Indeed, to assail the fort from the northern extremity seemed doomed to failure, the few men leading could be picked off and would roll down the declivities on this side or that, or encumber the path by which those behind were pressing on, and expose them also to be shot down, for the enemy possessed muskets, cannon, and also a swivel captured when Lee was killed.

During the eight days they remained on the hill it rained incessantly, and the force suffered severely from cold, finding little shelter in their leaking huts, the earth floors of which were soon converted into pools of mire. On the 9th, thinking that the force in advancing towards Rentap's fortification, had left its rear unguarded, a body of the enemy that had marched to Rentap's assistance made an attack on the camp, but they soon found out their mistake, and were easily beaten off. The next day a division of Dayaks and Malays proceeded against Rentap's allies, whom they drove back,

and whose houses they plundered and burnt. On the following days other parties were sent out to do the enemy as much harm as possible, and to deter them from joining Rentap's party in the stockade, or harassing the main assailing force. In the meantime the Tuan Muda had attempted to get his men to storm the fortress at night, promising to lead the way himself; but they would not face the risk, though later on they consented to attack the place in force. Three days were spent in constructing portable screens of laths and bamboos, under the cover of which parties could progress along the dangerous ridge and make an attempt to set fire to the stockade. At mid-day on the 15th the attack commenced.

I took up my position with a rifle, and watched for movements among the enemy, but the active work I left to Aing, who, drawn sword in hand, superintended with much activity. The sounds were deafening, and the fellows carried the wood and materials under the fire of Rentap's guns. At 4 P.M. my party had attained to within six or seven yards from the outer fort, and the scene was truly exciting. Our enemies evidently were not numerous. They threw stones from the inside which fell on the heads of our fellows, and used muskets, together with a swivel. At half-past five our leader, crouching under the moving stockade, called for fire, and the wood collected was in considerable quantities. At this juncture Aing fell, wounded by a musket shot. Then evening set in, and we were obliged to return to our quarters. The enemy yelled in triumph at our departure.

The wood collected had been so saturated with rain that it refused to kindle.

As I lay down to rest at night, I gave up all thought of gaining Rentap's fortress, but resolved to see what could be done elsewhere. When I rose the last morning, the enemy was yelling, and my first desire was to get about a hundred of the strongest young fellows together, command myself, and proceed to Atui, where there were three long houses of enemies, about six hours' walk distant. This I promised to do in three days, when I would return here and march back with the whole force. I could obtain no volunteers; some said they were sick, others out of provisions, and I was obliged to bow to circumstances, and at eight o'clock our party began to descend the mountain.

The retreat was conducted without serious molestation by the enemy, but, on reaching Antu, it was found that owing to the rain a freshet had come down, the river rising twelve feet, and had swept the stockade away and carried off over seventy of the boats. The discouragement was great, and the return down the river was not effected without some annoyance from the enemy, who hid in the jungle and fired on the party as, in overcrowded boats, it descended the Sekrang. None were thus killed, but some were drowned.

Thus ended the first expedition against Sadok. It had done something, though no serious damage, but it exalted the confidence of Rentap in the impregnability of his stronghold. Practically it had been a failure, and so it was felt to be among Malays and Dayaks generally. The unrest in the country became more accentuated, and the daring of the Saribas increased.

In April, 1858, the Tuan Muda says:

I had for many months been tormented by the affairs in Saribas, which had been for generations the hotbed of head-hunters and piracy in every shape. The people were becoming more audacious, and I found it had been to no purpose holding communication with even the Malays, who, a few days ago, refused to receive a letter, and declared they intended shortly to ascend the river and live with the Dayaks, and eat pork as they did. It was evident that a crisis was approaching which would require resolute action, or our *prestige* would be injured in this quarter. This we could by no means afford to lose, as stoppage of all trade and communication on the coast would inevitably ensue.

A fleet of forty Saribas pirates' vessels was known to be ready to descend the river for a foray on the coast under Saji and another notorious Dayak chief, Lintong;[1] and was only detained till the boat of the former was ready at Paku, forty miles from the mouth. No time was to be lost to

[1] His *nom de guerre*, or *ensumbar* in Dayak, was Mua-ari, literally the Face of the Day. He was sometimes foe and sometimes friend, and will be mentioned again. The *ensumbar* is frequently, not always, given to or adopted by warriors who have in some way or another gained renown. Some writers have confused it with the *julok*, or nickname, which refers to some bodily defect or peculiarity, and with names given to children at birth, such as Tedong, the cobra; Bulan, the moon; Matahari, the sun; Besi, iron. Malays are sometimes given a *nom de guerre*, such as Sauh Besi, above mentioned, and Sherip Sahap was known as Bujang Brani, the Brave Bachelor, which is also a Dayak *ensumbar*; others are the White Hawk, the Hovering Hawk, the Torrent of Blood, etc. The totem is unknown amongst the Sea-Dayaks.

prevent this force from reaching the sea, and the Tuan Muda sent to Kuching for aid. Meantime he manned his big boat with sixty men, and a 3-pounder was placed in her bows. Thus equipped, he sped to Lingga, where he fortunately found the small gunboat schooner, the *Jolly Bachelor*, commanded by John Channon.[1] He now started up the Saribas river with a picked crew, and with numerous native boats following. The flotilla advanced as far as the mouth of the Padi river, on which was the village of Saji. Here they anchored, and a 6-pounder gun was pointed up the Saribas in case the enemy's forty war-boats should come down. Thence a party was detailed inland to attack Saji and his pestilent horde. This was done. The enemy was driven back with loss, and their houses destroyed. A more dreaded enemy than the Saribas now assailed the expedition, and that was cholera. In consternation the force began to break up and return home. The Tuan Muda resolved on constructing a fort and establishing a government on the river, and for that purpose retired down to Betong, a site he had selected as most suitable for a station.

Whilst engaged in collecting materials for the fort, the reinforcements from Kuching arrived under the charge of young Mr. J. B. Cruickshank,[2] but too late to be of any use. The cholera prevented any further action being taken; but the time was usefully spent in completing the fort. Leaving Cruickshank in charge, the Tuan Muda returned to Sekrang, and while there heard that the Saribas were again in motion for a coast raid, their destination being unknown.

This was led by the redoubtable Linggir again. The Tuan Muda at once sent orders for the Balau Dayaks to muster and intercept the force. The order was promptly carried out, and Linggir's bala was defeated with a loss of fourteen

[1] John Channon, a merchant seaman, served the Government for many years. Of him the Tuan Muda wrote in 1859: "John had been my companion for many dreary months in the hot cabin of his vessel. He had charge of the *Jolly* for years, and many a creek and dangerous cranny had she become acquainted with in our expeditions. His valuable services, as well as steady and brave conduct, both on board and in the jungles, cannot be too highly praised in the annals of Sarawak."

[2] James Brooke Cruickshank, a godson of the Rajah. He joined in February, 1856, when about fifteen years of age; and at this time was stationed in the Sadong. He served for many years in the Dayak countries; and ultimately became Resident of the 3rd Division. He retired in 1875, and died in 1894.

men, Linggir himself having another very narrow escape. But other parties were out, and the Tuan Muda himself set forth for the Saribas to intercept some of these marauders. Here he was joined by Mr. Watson[1] on his way to take charge of the new fort—a welcome addition for the reinforcement of that establishment.

The Tuan Muda warned the Malay villagers at the mouth of the Saribas, who were restless and desirous of encouraging the pirates, that they would be held responsible should any pirate boats be suffered to pass, and then returned to Sekrang to hasten preparations for an ascent of the Saribas river with a large body of men to chastise the turbulent natives who, led by Saji, had attacked Betong fort on July 14, 1858, and to press on and again try conclusions with Rentap.

After some delay the Kuching force started, and reached the rendezvous at the mouth of the Saribas river, but the Tuan Muda had been delayed, waiting for his Dayaks, and it proceeded to Betong. The leading division was a force from Kuching under the Tuan Besar, who commanded this expedition. It passed on several days before the Tuan Muda with the main force arrived at Betong fort, but was soon overtaken. The river was found to have been purposely obstructed. Large trees standing low on the banks had been felled so as to fall across, and, where narrow, block the stream. And this had been done for several miles. They were not formed into a boom, but left to lie where they fell. This is a favourite plan of the Dayaks for hindering the progress of an enemy up stream. Moreover, by cutting trees inclining to the river nearly through to the breaking point, and then sustaining them by means of rattans, they can in a moment sever these strings and let the trees fall on and crush the leading boats. Some thirty-five years ago, a Dutch gunboat whilst steaming up the Kapuas river was sunk in this manner, and her crew slaughtered.

Notwithstanding the obstructions, the flotilla advanced, and the enemy retired up stream. During five days' hard rowing, it progressed till it reached Pengirit, just below the Langit river, and here the vanguard fell in with the enemy

[1] Mr. W. C. Watson joined October, 1857, and resigned in 1869.

under Saji. Saji gallantly attacked, and met the fate he so richly deserved. "Saji's name and acts had been in my ears for years past," wrote the Tuan Muda. "Many a bloody deed had been perpetrated, and he always had boasted that the White Men's powder and shot would take no effect on his body." So fell one of the most cruel and treacherous head-hunters of those days.

At the mouth of the Langit river a stockade was erected. Here on a clear night the moon was eclipsed. The Tuan Muda had seen by his almanack that this would occur, and had announced to the host that it would take place. If this had not been done a panic would have ensued, and the natives would have insisted on leaving; but as it was, they conceived that the phenomenon had been ordered by the white chief, to strike terror into the hearts of their foes, as also to encourage them; they were accordingly in good heart to advance.

They pushed on readily enough to Nanga Tiga,[1] the junction of three rivers, one flowing from Sadok, one from the watershed where rises the Kanowit river, and the third the main Saribas. Here the boats were to be left, and a stout stockade was erected. Thence preparations were made to advance up-country towards the Rejang. The Tuan Muda, with whom went Cruickshank, was in command and led the van. Messrs. Steele and Fox[2] were to take charge of the rear division. The whole party comprised 200 Malays and 2000 Dayaks.

From Nanga Tiga this party made for the head-waters of the Kajulau, to lay waste the territory of the troublesome natives there. It may seem, and it does seem at first sight, and to such as are not acquainted with native warfare, a barbarous process to burn villages and destroy the padi-fields with the crops on which the natives subsist. But, as already said, it is the only way in which these savages can be brought to submission. The women indeed suffer, but then they are the principal instigators of all the attacks on inoffensive tribes. They rather than the men were greedy after heads,

[1] Nanga = the mouth of a river in Sea-Dayak; tiga = three.

[2] Mr. C. Fox came to Sarawak from India in 1851, as master of the Mission School; he shortly afterwards joined the Rajah.

and scoff at their husbands or sweethearts as milksops if they remain at home, and do not go forth to massacre and plunder. In fact, the destruction of their homes strikes the women to the heart, and turns them into advocates of peace. Among the Dayaks the women are a predominant power. The Dayaks are as woman-ridden and as henpecked as are Englishmen. Moreover, the destruction of native buildings is a more merciful proceeding than the slaying of a number of men in battle.

After the return of this ravaging party, which had done a circuit of thirty miles, a day was given to rest, and then the main body prepared to march to Sadok; and this time the expedition was furnished with a mortar that was expected to bring down Rentap's fortification. It was a six-pounder and only a few inches long, and was carried by Dayaks slung in a network of rattans.

Without opposition the host approached the fort of Sadok.

We met with no obstacles in mounting to the summit, which we reached at a little past ten in the morning. Rentap's party were within his wooden walls, and not a living being could be seen. Our force set to collect wood, and within an hour a small stockade was erected, in which our mortar was arranged; it was mounted within easy firing distance of the enemy's fortress, and, under the superintendence of Mr. John Channon, the firing commenced. The shells were thrown with great precision, often lodging under the roof of the enemy's fort; at other times bursting over it, and more than once, we heard them burst in the middle inside. Not a word was spoken by them, and some were under the impression that the place was deserted, when the tapping of the old gong would recommence as blithe as ever. Fifty rounds of shell were fired, besides hollow ones with full charges of powder, all of which appeared to take no more effect than if we were pitching pebbles at them. None of our party yet dared venture too near, but some of the most energetic pushed on to another stockade, within a few fathoms of the fort, when the enemy commenced firing, but the shot did not penetrate the wood. Our young Dayaks advanced, and two were immediately knocked over and others wounded. Other parties also advanced, and an active scene ensued; some reached the planking of the fortress, sheltering their heads with their shields, showers of stones were thrown from the inside, and spears were jabbed from a platform above. There was such a commotion for a few minutes, that I made certain our party were

effecting an entrance, and, for the purpose of supporting them, I rushed out of our stockade, followed by a few, but had not passed on over more than four or five feet, before the enemy fired grape, wounding a fine young Dayak behind me, whom I had just time enough to save from falling down the precipice by seizing him by the hair, and passing him on to others behind the stockade. My brother and I advanced a few steps, but found our following was too inadequate for storming, and many were already retreating. Volleys of stones were flying round our heads, and as we retired again behind the stockade another charge of grape poured into the wood now at our backs. The chiefs had congregated to beg us to desist from making any further advance, and I must admit that we only risked our lives needlessly. The natives wisely observed, "We cannot pull these planks down with our hands, we cannot climb over them, and our arms make no impression on the enemy."

It was therefore resolved to abandon the attack. The retreat was begun at once, Rentap's followers shouting after the party the mocking words, 'Bring all your fireguns from England, we are not afraid of you,' and discharging shot and spears and poisoned arrows. The enemy, yelling in triumph, threatened the assailants as they retired down the hill, but kept at a decent distance or hid behind cover for fear of the firearms.

Thus ended the second attempt on Sadok, again a failure. The mortar had not answered its purpose, nothing but a cannon could effect a breach in the solid palisading of the fortress. This venture was made in 1858, and no further attack on Sadok was attempted till 1861. There were other grave matters to engage the attention of the Rajah and his nephews, and although the upper Saribas were continuously troublesome, and had to be checked and reprisals made for their onslaughts on the peaceable Dayaks, for three years no attempt could be undertaken to dislodge Rentap.

But in 1861, it was resolved finally to assault and humble him. Meanwhile a good many of Rentap's followers had deserted him, and he was no longer popular. His violence and wilfulness had alienated many, and more had come to see that under the Sarawak Government the Dayaks who submitted were contented and flourishing. He had moreover offended their prejudices. He had descended from his

eyrie, carried off a girl, discarded his old wife, and elevated the young one to be Ranee of Sadok. This was a grave violation of Dayak custom, and was resented accordingly.

On September 16, 1861, an expedition under the command of the Tuan Muda was ready to start up the Saribas river to dislodge Rentap. According to the received axiom, a third time is lucky, and on this occasion success was achieved.

The new expedition was to be better furnished than had been those which preceded it, and was to take with it rockets, a 12-pounder gun, and a 6-pounder; a working party of twenty Chinamen to make roads and throw up earthworks, a force of Sidi boys or negroes, daring fellows, ready to storm the stockade, and numerous Malays and Dayaks. On October 20, the expedition reached Nanga Tiga, the old position in 1858, and there once more the boats were left, a stockade erected, and the 6-pounder mounted in it. The land party then advanced over the same ground as before, the guides leading the way, followed by the Chinese and the Sidi boys; the Europeans being placed in the centre. Rain came down in torrents, as on the former occasion, and a difficulty ensued in getting the Chinamen to keep the powder dry.

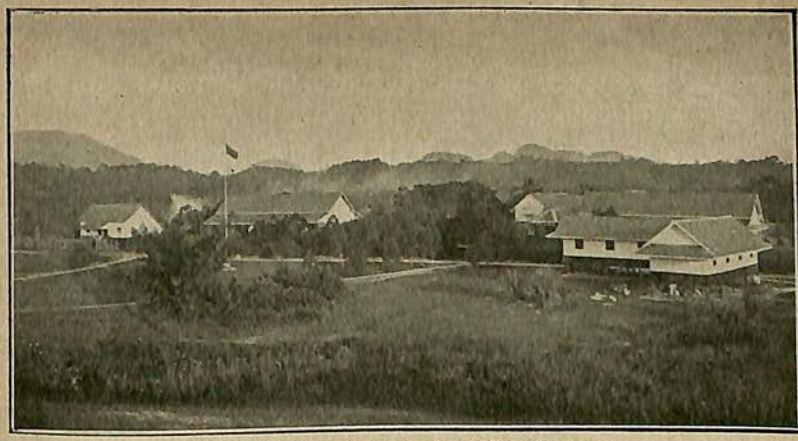
On the 25th, the foot of Sadok was reached, whereupon two chiefs, the brothers Loyoh and Nanang, came in and made their submission, but this was accepted only after the payment of a fine of forty rusa jars worth £400, which were to be retained for three years, and then returned to the tribe, or their chiefs, should they remain loyal; and eventually they were restored. Rentap got wind of this, and sent out a party who set fire to Nanang's house, which was close to his on Sadok.

The gun was slung on a long pole, and sixty men were detailed to convey it up the mountain, but this could be effected by the means of ropes alone. No opposition was offered by Rentap, although four hours were consumed in transporting the gun to the summit. At 4.30 A.M. of the 28th, it was in position, but as a dense mist had rolled down enveloping the mountain top, nothing could be done with

the gun till 7.30, when the mist had cleared away; and then such a raging wind was blowing, that the rockets could not be used. The gun was discharged, but, after the seventeenth round, the carriage gave way; however, it had effected the purpose for which it had been brought up, by tearing gaps in the stockade of Rentap's fortress, and now, under cover of a volley of musketry, the storming party rushed over the neck of rock, and dashed in at the gaps that had been made. They found the fortress deserted by all but the dead and dying. Rentap, perceiving that it was no longer tenable, had fled with his men down the opposite end of the mountain. In the fortress were found the arms captured when he fought with Brereton and Lee, in 1853, and a large quantity of ammunition, which had been supplied by Sherip Masahor; also, amongst others, a brass cannon taken from a gun-boat belonging to the Sultan of Pontianak that had been captured by Rentap in 1837 off Mempawa, in sight of her consort, a Dutch gun-boat. In the afternoon of the same day, fuel was heaped about the stockade and long houses; a gun was fired, and in ten minutes a column of fire mounted and was carried in blazing streamers before the wind. As the darkness settled down, the summit of Sadok was glowing and shooting up tongues of flame like a volcano, visible for miles around, and proclaiming unmistakably the end of Rentap's domination as Rajah of the interior.

Rentap will not be noticed again. Broken, and deserted by all, he retired to the Entabai branch of the Kanowit, where he died some years later.

ON THE WAR-PATH



GOVERNMENT STATION, BAU (Gray's ridge).

CHAPTER VI

THE CHINESE REBELLION, AND SECRET SOCIETIES

WE must take a retrospective glance before proceeding with the subject of this chapter, in order to note briefly some important incidents, which have not been recorded in their proper sequence, so as not to interrupt a connected narrative of the events related in the preceding chapter. During the period covered by that chapter happened the grave disturbances caused by Sherip Masahor, aided by the disaffection of the Datu Patinggi Gapur, and backed by Bruni intrigue; also the troubles at Muka, which ended in the cession to the raj of that and neighbouring towns, with the intermediate country up to point Kedurong. Both occurred previously to Rentap's overthrow, but subsequently to the Chinese insurrection, and both will be fully related in the two following chapters.

In 1850, as we have already recorded, the Chinese colony in Upper Sarawak had been greatly augmented by the arrival of some thousands of Chinese refugees from Pemangkat in Dutch territory, who had come over into

Sarawak to escape the tyranny of their stronger rivals the, Chinese of Montrado.

These Chinese were mostly gold miners, and had established themselves at Bau, Bidi, Paku, and Tundong, under one Kongsi, or company, to exploit the mines in the vicinity of these villages. Bau, their principal village, was the headquarters of the Kongsi. Others had settled at Siniawan, and Segobang, but these were agriculturists, and harmless people, though they were reluctantly dragged into rebellion by the machinations of the Secret Society formed by the turbulent mining communities, and became involved in the ruin that followed its attempt to overthrow the Government.

In Kuching there was also a fairly large number of Chinese, consisting mainly of merchants and traders, mostly well-to-do people, whose interests, as well as racial antagonism, placed them, then as now, in opposition to the principles of such secret societies, which aimed at the subversion of all constituted authority, and the substitution of terrorism.

For years past a secret society had been forming in Upper Sarawak, with its headquarters at Bau. It was not the product of any discontent with the Rajah's Government, to which its members had fled for protection from the tyranny to which they had been subjected over the border, but was formed by a few ambitious and unscrupulous men and their adherents to gain power, and these were principally the scattered remains of societies which had been driven out of Dutch territory.

The name of the Society was the Sam-Tiau-Kiau Hueh,[1] and it was amalgamated with the great Thien-Ti[2] Hueh, or Triad Society of China, which was firmly established in Singapore, and had its ramifications throughout the East. The Thien-Ti Hueh had its rise in the 17th century, and had a political origin. The object was the restoration of the Ming dynasty, which in the person of Tsung-Cheng was cut off by the Manchus in or about 1628. The Society is called "Triad," it being also known by the name of Sam-hap or "three united"—a Triad of Heaven, Earth, and Man; and

[1] Hueh, or Hui, is the Chinese word for a secret society.
[2] Tien, heaven—ti, earth.

these forces, where brought into perfect unity, produce peace and harmony. But it has entirely lost its political character, and has become socialistic and anarchical.[1] Although the maxim or motto of the Society is "Obey Heaven and work Righteousness," these objects are the very last sought by the members. Both in China and in the Dutch Colonies the League is forbidden by severe laws, and in Sarawak since 1870 the punishment for being the leader of any secret society is death. In China itself, to be found in possession of any books, seals or insignia of the Triad Society would render a person liable to decapitation, or subject him to a persecution to which even death would be preferable. The sure sign of the beginning of activity of a Society for some object it has set before it is a series of murders of those Chinese who have refused to join it, who have incurred its displeasure, or who are mistrusted. His blood is drunk, and an ear sent to the head of the Society, in token that he has been put to death. In Singapore it is now less noxious. There, every Society has to be registered and reported; and no secret society is allowed to meet that has not conformed to regulations, that deprive it of half its secrecy.[2]

There is not a shrewder or more industrious man under the sun than the yellow Chinaman. "Il engraisse le sol ou il est planté," as Napoleon said of the Englishman. He is an admirable market-gardener, and will get more out of half an acre of land than any man else. He is a diligent planter, miner, and artisan, possesses great ability as a merchant, and is indispensable for the proper development of tropical countries. But in a good many exists an invincible love of belonging to a secret society, and such a society, although nominally a benefit-club, is really a hotbed of anarchy.

As it gathered strength the Sam-Tiau-Kiau Hueh became contumacious and insolent. As early as the close of 1850 it had brought itself conspicuously to the attention of the

[1] It is still part of the oath of the initiated, "I will use my utmost endeavour to drive out the Chheng and establish the Beng dynasty."—"Pickering, Chinese Secret Societies," in the *Journal* of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, 1878.

[2] Pickering, who knew a good deal about the Society and wrote thereon, had his life attempted, and, though not killed, was badly crippled.

Rajah, and the principal men were warned to desist in time. This warning was unheeded, and a little later it was discovered that members were being enrolled by persuasion and threats, and that an agent of the Triad Society had come over from Singapore to further its objects. This man, Kah Yun, was arrested and sentenced to death, and others were fined and flogged. In 1852, the Chinese in Upper Sarawak, who had more than once before been turbulent and rebellious, openly resisted a Government officer, and prevented him from arresting a criminal, a member of the Hueh. The Tuan Muda was sent to the spot with a force, but, though well armed, the Chinese did not then feel themselves strong enough to resist, and offered the most humble obeisance, delivering up the culprit. They were then ordered to build a fort at Belidah, below Siniawan, to equip it with arms and ammunition, and to pay the wages of the fortmen. The fort, which was to be a check on the Chinese, was built, and placed in charge of Sherip Matusain, with a small garrison of Malays. The Chinese had been steadily collecting arms and ammunition for some time past, and they were now ordered to deliver up a hundred muskets, but the demand was afterwards relinquished. This was a mistake, as they had no need of firearms for their protection, living as they did amongst the peaceable Land Dayaks, and the Tuan Muda was rightly of opinion that they had not been sufficiently humbled, nor their power sufficiently weakened. To the Hueh, however, the lesson was useful—it showed them the strength of the Government, and taught them that submission would be wise until they were better prepared.

In Sarawak in 1857 there were about 4000 of these yellow men, located mainly in the mining district. There were numerous settlements over the frontier in the territories of the Sultan of Sambas, where also the people were engaged on the gold mines, and the Hueh could rely upon their active aid.

A good deal of smuggling of opium had been in progress, and evidence was obtained that convicted the Kongsi of gold-miners at Bau of having been engaged in this illicit trade; whereupon it was fined £150, a small sum considering the

amount that the revenue had been defrauded by their means. This fine was imposed a month only before the outbreak occurred ; it was paid, and the Hueh feigned submission.

The Sultan of Sambas had long been jealous of the growing prosperity of Sarawak, and of the contrast afforded to his own misrule by the liberal and good government there. Moreover, numerous Land-Dayaks from Sambas had moved into the Rajah's territories for the sake of the protection there afforded, which they could not obtain under the Sultan. He was accordingly willing to encourage any attempt made to overthrow the government of the Rajah.

In October, 1856, trouble with China began, and Commissioner Yeh, defying Sir John Bowring and Admiral Seymour, publicly offered a reward of thirty dollars for every English head. Rumour of this, greatly magnified into a general slaughter and expulsion of the English, had reached the Chinese in Singapore, where an outbreak took place in 1857, and in Sarawak, where signs of unrest among the Chinese became apparent. The Commission of Inquiry into the conduct of the Rajah greatly tended to encourage the Chinese to revolt. They believed that the British Government strongly disapproved of the rule of the Rajah, and would not lift a finger to maintain it. There was but a handful of white men in Sarawak, and the Land-Dayaks were well known to be a timorous people, indisposed to war. It was also thought that there was a body there of disaffected Malays, under the influence of the Rajah's old adversary, the Pangiran Makota, who was now supreme in Bruni, governing the mind of the imbecile Sultan, and watching for every opportunity of upsetting the rule of the English Rajah in the south.

The headmen of the Kongsi accordingly resolved upon striking a sudden blow, mastering Kuching, and sweeping the Rajah and all his officials out of the place. But, so as not to give occasion to the British Government to interfere, they determined to massacre them only, and to spare the lives of the few English merchants and missionaries resident at Kuching, and not members of the Rajah's staff.

At the close of 1856, the Rajah was at Singapore,

whither he had gone to recruit, as he was much out of health. His nephew, the Tuan Muda, was at Sekrang, engaged on the construction of a new fort, when he received a letter from the principal official in Kuching, requesting him to be present at the Chinese New Year, and informing him that he had received disquieting intelligence about the Chinese gold-miners, who, under the plea of erecting a new joss or idol, or Tai-pi-kong,[1] meditated an attack on Kuching, and an attempt to overthrow the Government and establish their own independent rule. The Tuan Muda at once sought Abang Aing, the principal Sekrang chief, a man to be thoroughly trusted, but he was laid up with small-pox, and unable to help.

"He spoke very kindly and to the purpose, telling me plainly that he did not like the sound of the reports, and begged me to be careful. He regretted that he could not go himself, but would send a younger brother, and urge the Orang Kaya to accompany me, and he promised to arrange so as to follow me if anything serious really occurred. No Christian could have offered advice in a kinder tone or better spirit."

Accordingly the Tuan Muda hastened to Kuching, but found that all was quiet there, and it was supposed that the reports were unnecessarily alarming. Thus satisfied, he departed, and returned to Sekrang. Mr. Arthur Crookshank, then in charge at Kuching during the absence of the Rajah and the Tuan Besar, who was in England, however, took the precaution to man the small stockades, which constituted the only defences of the town, with a sufficient garrison.

On February 14, 1857, four days before the insurrection broke out, a Chinaman, who had formerly been expelled from Sarawak territory for joining a secret society, appeared in Bruni, and was detected attempting to induce the Chinese servants of Mr. Spenser St. John, then Consul-General there, to enter the Thien-ti Secret Society; and encouraging them to do so with the assurance that a general massacre of the white men in Sarawak was in contemplation,

[1] Tai-pi-kong was the name of the joss.

and that the Chinese would establish their own supremacy there. It is therefore by no means improbable that he was an agent of the Kongsi sent to Bruni, to communicate the plan of insurrection to Makota. Moreover, it was ascertained that overtures had been made to certain disaffected Malays in Sarawak to shut their eyes, if they did not feel inclined for actual co-operation in the attempt.

On the Rajah's return to Kuching from Singapore, Mr. Crookshank told him of the disquieting rumours, and of what he had done for the protection of the capital. And, although Mr. Middleton, the Inspector of Police, confirmed his opinion that precautions should be taken, the Rajah could not be induced to believe that there was danger, and unwisely dismissed the garrison from the forts, and no efficient watch was kept.

On February 18, the chief of the Kongsi assembled about six hundred of the ablest-bodied Chinamen belonging to the Society at Bau, armed them and marched to Tundong on the Sarawak river, where a squadron of large boats had been prepared to carry them to Kuching.

"During their slow passage down the river," says Mr. St. John, "a Malay who was accustomed to trade with the Chinese overtook them in a canoe and actually induced them to permit him to pass, under the plea that his wife and children lived in a place called Batu Kawa, eight miles above the town, and would be frightened if they heard so many men passing, and he not there to reassure them. Instead of going home, he pulled down as fast as he could till he reached the town of Kuching, and going straight to his relative, a Malay trader of the name of Gapur, who was a trustworthy and brave man, told him what he had seen; but Gapur said, 'Don't go and tell the chief or the Rajah such a tissue of absurdities,' yet he went himself over to the Bandar and informed him, but the Datu's answer was, 'The Rajah is unwell, we have heard similar reports for the last twenty years—don't go and bother him about it. I will tell him in the morning what your relative says.' This great security was caused by the universal belief that the Chinese could not commit so great a folly as to attempt to seize the government of the country, considering that they did not number above 4000, while at that time the Malays and Dayaks within the Sarawak territories amounted to 200,000 at least. It is strange, however, and was an unpardonable neglect of the Bandar, not to have sent

a fast boat up the river to ascertain what was really going on. Had he done so, the town and numerous lives would have been saved.

Shortly after midnight the squadron arrived unnoticed, and dividing into two parties proceeded to surprise the Government buildings and the stockades. The details of the attack on the Rajah's house and of his escape are given in an account by his steward, Charles Penty. Mr. Penty says:—

I was sleeping in a room near the Rajah, who had not been well for some days. The attack took place about midnight, with fearful yelling and firing. I hurried out of bed, and met the Rajah in the passage in the dark, who at the moment took me for one of the rebels, grappled me by the throat, and was about to shoot me, when he fortunately discovered it was me. We then opened the venetian window of my room and saw poor Mr. Nicholetts murdered before our eyes. The Rajah said, "Ah, Penty, it will be our turn next."

Then we went to another part of the house, where the crowd of rebels was even thicker. The Rajah seemed determined to fight. While he was loading a double-barrel gun for my use, our light went out and he had to do without. The Rajah then led the way to his bathroom, under his bedroom, and rushed out of the door. The rebels, having gathered round poor Mr. Nicholetts' body, left the way pretty clear, and the Rajah, with his sword and revolver in hand, made his way to a small creek and swam under the bow of a boat that had brought the rebels.[1] Being unable to swim, I ran up the plantation and rushed into the jungle. The Rajah's beautiful house was blazing from end to end, and the light reflected for a great distance. Mr. Crookshank's and Mr. Middleton's houses were also burning. At daybreak I heard Malay voices; they, like myself, were running away from the town, which was in the hands of the rebels. They kindly clothed me and took me to the Rajah.

After diving under the Chinese boat, the Rajah had swum across the creek, where he lay exhausted on the mud bank for a while, until sufficiently recovered to be able to reach the house of a Malay official, where shortly after he was joined by Mr. Crookshank and Mr. Middleton. The Mr. Nicholetts who was murdered before the eyes of the Rajah

[1] The Chinese, holding the Rajah to be invulnerable, and being greatly in fear of him, purposely left the exit by the door of the bathroom unguarded.

was a promising young officer, who had just arrived from Lundu on a visit, and was lodged in a cottage near the Rajah's house.[1] Startled from his sleep by the yells of the Chinese, he rushed from his door, when the rebels fell on him, hacked off his head, and, putting it on a pike, paraded the town with it, shouting that they had killed the Rajah himself.

Imminent as their own danger was, the Malays did not forget the Rajah, and a gallant little band led by Haji Bua Hasan, then the Datu Imaum, hastened to his aid, though they were too late; and they had to fight their way back.

"The other attacks," says Mr. St. John, "took place simultaneously. Mr. and Mrs. Crookshank, rushing forth on hearing this midnight alarm, were cut down—the latter left for dead, the former seriously wounded. The constable's house was attacked, but he and his wife escaped, while their two children and an English lodger were killed by the insurgents. Here occurred a scene which shows how barbarous were the Chinese. When the rebels burst into Mr. Middleton's house, he fled, and his wife following found herself in the bathroom, and by the shouts was convinced that her retreat was cut off. In the meantime the Chinese had seized her two children, and brought the eldest down into the bathroom to show the way his father had escaped. Mrs. Middleton's only refuge was a large water-jar; there she heard the poor little boy questioned, pleading for his life, and heard his shriek when the fatal sword was raised which severed his head from his body. The fiends kicked the little head with loud laughter from one to another. They then set fire to the house, and she distinctly heard the second child shrieking as they tossed him into the flames. Mrs. Middleton remained in the jar till the falling embers forced her to leave. She then got into a neighbouring pond, and thus escaped the eyes of the Chinese, who were frantically rushing about the burning house. Her escape was most extraordinary.[2]

"The stockades, however, were not surprised. The Chinese, waiting for the signal of attack on the houses, were at length perceived by the sentinel, and he immediately roused the treasurer, Mr. Crymble, who resided in the stockade, which contained the arsenal and the prison. He endeavoured to make some preparation for defence, although he had but four Malays with him. He had

[1] He had joined the Sarawak service the year before. He was a brother of Colonel Nicholetts, who was married to a sister of the present Rajah.

[2] A Mr. Wellington was killed trying to defend Mrs. Middleton and her children. He was a clerk in the Borneo Company, and had only lately joined.

scarcely time, however, to load a 6-pounder field-piece, and get his own rifle ready, before the Chinese with loud shouts rushed to the assault. They were led by a man bearing in each hand a flaming torch. Mr. Crymble waited until they were within forty yards, he then fired and killed the man who, by the light he bore, made himself conspicuous, and, before the crowd recovered from the confusion in which they were thrown by the fall of their leader, discharged among them the 6-pounder loaded with grape, which made the assailants retire behind the neighbouring houses, or hide in the outer ditches. But, with four men, little could be done; and some of the rebels having quietly crossed the inner ditch, commenced removing the planks which constituted the only defence. To add to the difficulty, they threw over into the inner court little iron tripods, with flaming torches attached, which rendered it as light as day, while they remained shrouded in darkness.

"To increase the number of the defenders, Mr. Crymble released two Malay prisoners, one a madman who had killed his wife, the other a debtor. This latter quickly disappeared, while the former, regardless of the shot flying around, stood to the post assigned him, opposite a plank which the Chinese were trying to remove. He had orders to fire his carbine at the first person who appeared, and, the plank giving way, a man attempted to force his body through, he pulled the trigger without lowering the muzzle of his carbine, and sent the ball through his own brains. Mr. Crymble now found it useless to prolong the struggle, as one of his few men was killed, and another, a brave Malay corporal, was shot down at his side. The wounded man begged Mr. Crymble to fly and leave him there, but asked to shake hands with him first, and tell him whether he had not done his duty. The brave Irishman seized him by the arm and attempted to drag him up the stairs leading to the dwelling over the gate, but the Chinese had already gained the courtyard, and pursuing them, drove their spears through the wounded man, and Mr. Crymble was forced to let go his hold, and with a brave follower, Daud, swung himself down into the ditch below. Some of the rebels, seeing their attempt to escape, tried to stop Mr. Crymble, and a man stabbed at him, but only glanced his thick frieze coat, and received in return a cut across the face from the Irishman's cutlass, which was a remembrance to carry to the grave.

"The other stockade, though it had been but a corporal's watch of three Malays, did not surrender, but finding that every other place was in the hands of the Chinese, the brave defenders opened their gates and, charging the crowd of rebels, sword in hand, made their escape, though they were all severely wounded in the attempt.

"The confusion which reigned throughout the rest of the town may be imagined, as, startled by the shouts and yells of the

Chinese, the inhabitants rushed to the doors and windows, and beheld night turned into day by the bright flames which rose in three directions, where the Rajah's, Mr. Crookshank's, and Mr. Middleton's houses were all burning at the same time."

Those English whose dwellings had not been attacked gathered in the Mission-house, to the number of six men with eight or more children. All the men had guns, and it was resolved that they should endeavour to keep the Chinese back till the ladies had made their escape into the jungle. The Bishop, armed like the rest, gave his blessing to the whole party that united in brief prayer; but with the first streaks of daylight a party of seven Chinese came to the Mission-house, saying that their quarrel was with the Government only, and not with the English generally. They requested the Bishop to go with them to the hospital to attend to some thirteen or fourteen [1] of their men who had been wounded in the attack upon the fort.

The Rajah as soon as possible proceeded to the Datu Bandar's house, and being quickly joined by his English officers, endeavoured to organise a force to surprise the victorious Chinese, but it was impossible. No sooner did he collect a few men than their wives and children surrounded them and refused to be left,—and being without proper arms or ammunition, it was but a panic-stricken mob; so he instantly took his determination with that decision which had been the foundation of his success, and giving up the idea of an immediate attack, advised the removal of the women and children to the left-hand bank of the river, where they would be safe from a land attack of the Chinese, who could make their way along the right-hand bank by a road at the back of the town. [2]

By the morning the women and children had been moved across, and the Rajah and his officers, having been joined by Abang Buyong [3] and some armed Malays, proceeded to the Samarahan, intending to go on to the Batang Lupar, and fall back on the well-equipped forts there to organise a force to drive out the rebels.

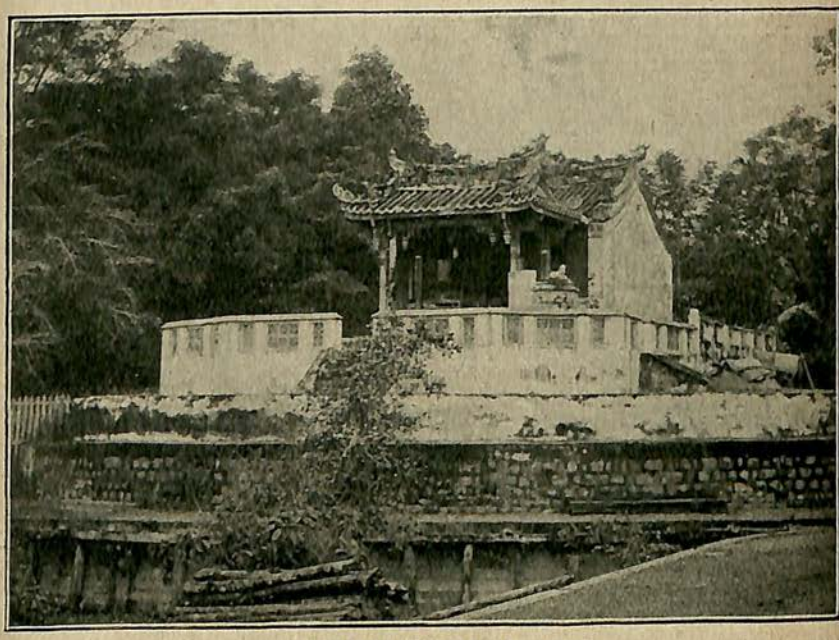
The next morning the Chinese chiefs summoned the Bishop; Mr. L. V. Helms, Manager of the Borneo Company

[1] St. John says thirty-seven, five of whom died before the Bishop's arrival.

[2] Spenser St. John, *Life of Sir James Brooke*, to whom we are mainly indebted for the following particulars we give of the insurrection.

[3] A Saribas Malay Chief, and a staunch supporter of the Government.

Limited; Mr. Rupell, a merchant, and the Datu Bandar, to appear before them in the Court-house. Seated on the Rajah's chair, the head Chief, supported by his secretaries, issued his orders that Mr. Helms and Mr. Rupell were to rule the foreign portion of the town, and the Datu Bandar the Malays, under the Kongsi as supreme rulers. The Bsihop now warned the Chinese that they were playing a desperate game, that the Tuan Muda would be coming down



OLD CHINESE TEMPLE, KUCHING.

upon them, with his host of Sekrang and Balau warriors, to avenge the death of his uncle and his friends—for most of them supposed the Rajah dead. Discouragement fell upon the Chinese, for they remembered that the Tuan Muda was the daring and popular leader of the Sea-Dayaks, and could bring many thousands of these wild warriors against them. They therefore decided to send him a letter to the effect that they would not interfere with him so long as he did not interfere with them, and confined himself to the districts under his government.

The leaders also knowing that the Rajah was not killed,

had offered a large reward for his capture, dead or alive, for what he was preparing they knew not. They were now doubly anxious to leave Kuching with their plunder, they therefore called upon the Europeans and the Malay chiefs present to swear fidelity to the Kongsi, and this they were forced to do under fear of instant death.

The next day at noon the Chinese retired up-river with their boats heavily laden with cannon, rifles, plate, money, and all the valuables upon which they could lay their hands. The Malay chiefs at once held a meeting at the Datu Bandar's house, when sturdy Abang Pata, the Datu Temanggong's son, avowed his determination to remain faithful to the Rajah and at once to wreck vengeance on his enemies. Though all were as faithful, wiser counsels prevailed, the Malays being so scattered, conveying their women and children to places of safety, that no organised attack could yet be made; but Pata impetuously dashed off with a dozen men in a small canoe, and following the Chinese, captured one of their boats, killing five of the crew. This, and the news reaching them that the Malays were preparing to resist, brought the Chinese back, recruited by several hundreds from Upper Sarawak, and the agriculturists of Segobang, whom they had forced to join them, and when the Rajah returned at the earnest request of the chiefs to lead them against the Chinese, a request he complied with, though he knew it was useless, he found the rest of the English flying, the town in the hands of the Chinese, and the Malay houses burning.

As soon as the Chinese boats were seen rounding the point above the town, the Malays gallantly dashed at them, and succeeded in capturing ten of their largest barges. They were, however, pressed back by the more numerous and better armed Chinese, and, though they lost heavily, they doggedly retreated retaining their prizes, which were laden with valuable plunder, and, what was of more use to them, a quantity of arms and ammunition, and secured them to a large trading vessel anchored in the centre of the river. Here they maintained a determined resistance, which they were now better able to do, and effectually defied the Chinese to dislodge them. They were commanded by the Datu Bandar Muhammad

Lana, a grave and gentle Malay, who now showed the courage of his father, the late Datu Patinggi Ali. The Chinese still held the town in force.

The Rajah was again forced to retire, to carry out his original intention of rallying his people up the coast, but his first care was to see to the safety of the ladies, the English non-combatants, and the wounded, and to send them off to safety at Lingga fort under the care of the Bishop in a schooner. Despondently he prepared next day to follow with a small flotilla of Malay boats, but at the mouth of the river, to his intense relief, the Borneo Company's steamer, the *Sir James Brooke*, arriving from Singapore, met them. The vanguard of the Tuan Muda's force, which was quickly coming to his relief, was also arriving, and now the tide had changed, and the day of reckoning had come.

The sight of the steamer and the Dayak bangkongs eagerly following was quite sufficient for the Chinese. They fired one wild volley, and fled panic-stricken, with the ships' guns playing on them, and pursued by the Dayaks and Malays.

The Datu Bandar's gallant band on board the trader and in war-boats around her had stood their ground in spite of heavy guns having been brought to bear upon them, and they now assumed the offensive. The Chinese, that morning, had crossed the river to destroy the Malay town on the other side; their boats were now seized, and the Dayaks pursued them into the jungle. Of that large party, not one can have escaped. Those who were not killed wandered into the jungle and died of starvation, or hanged themselves. Their bodies were eagerly sought for, as on many were found from five to twenty pounds sterling, besides silver spoons, forks, or other valuables, the plunder of the English houses.

The main body of the Chinese retired by road to Segobang, and from thence up-river in their boats.

We have already recorded how the news had been brought to the Tuan Muda at Sekrang, and how he hurried with his Dayaks to the Rajah's rescue, to find him safe and in good health, though crippled by the injuries he had received, on board the *Sir James Brooke*, which he had made his head-

quarters. Kuching was wrecked—"a mass of ashes, and confusion and ruin lay around. Half-habitable débris of houses only were left. The trees for many hundred yards around the fires were nearly all burnt black and leafless, and those remaining alive were drooping," so the Tuan Muda wrote, and we will now follow his account of the retribution which the rebels so deservedly met.

To check the pursuing boats of the Dayaks and Malays, the Chinese had thrown up a strong stockade at Lidah Tanah (lit. the tongue of land), a point of land at the junction of the right and left hand branches of the river. Here they placed a picked garrison under trusted leaders, and the stockade was well armed with guns and rifles that had been taken from Kuching.

A small force of Malays, and several hundreds of Sekrang and Saribas Dayaks were organised to attack it, and the mild Datu Bandar, in his new rôle of a redoubtable warrior, led them with such dash that the position was soon carried. Amongst the trophies that were brought back by the Dayaks the Chinese merchants recognised the heads of some of the principal leaders of the rebels, and showed marked satisfaction that such was the case.

The Rajah and the Tuan Muda then pushed on to Belidah, about eight miles above Lidah Tanah. Here the fort was found to have been destroyed, the rebels having left little behind them in their retreat but desolation and misery. The Malays and Dayaks were then despatched under Abang Buyong to attack the Chinese, but these latter were in full retreat from Bau, and their other villages, towards the border; once across they would be safe:

but the dogs of war were at their heels, harassing and cutting them off at every opportunity. Their plan of retreat was very skilfully arranged, and a fanatical idea of the infallibility of their Joss (idol), which they carried with them, kept them in order. We were helpless to a certain extent, in being unable to gather together an organised force, or we should have routed them without doubt, and fearful loss of life would have been the consequence. In looking back on these events, it was perhaps fortunate that we were not able to act more unitedly against them, but if it had been within our power at that time, the Joss undoubtedly would have been overturned, and the

people exterminated. The most merciful of men could not deny that they had richly merited such a punishment. They protected this image with the utmost caution, keeping their women and children around it, while their bravest men acted as a guard on the outside. They had advanced a considerable distance before the Dayaks approached. The Dayak leaders on closing were at once shot down. This made the others more cautious. But the Chinamen had our best rifles and arms, with all the necessary accoutrements belonging to them. The Dayaks then changed their tactics, and did not dare appear in the open road again, but entered the jungle on each side of the enemy, and thus harassed them continually, cutting off every straggler without mercy. The Chinamen were powerless to follow these wild cat-like fellows into the close jungles, and were obliged to submit to their fate as best they might. The road over which the rebels were retreating was one continued track of clothes, valuables, silver plate, and dead bodies. To enable their retreating force to gain a few minutes whilst passing precipitous places, they strewed the road with rice, and threw here and there a valuable article to retard and keep off their pursuers. This continued for several successive days, during which the Chinese must have suffered intensely. They were not even able to cook or sleep by night or day. They now arrived at a point which must have ended their career, if it had been properly held. This was Gombang Hill, which forms the frontier between Sambas and Sarawak: here was a long Dayak house, past which the Chinese could not go unless the inhabitants were favourably disposed to them;[1]—

but these suffered themselves to be bribed into permitting the rebels to pass unmolested. Thus the survivors of the Chinese escaped into Sambas territory.

But no sooner were they there than those of the Chinese who did not belong to the Secret Society, filled with resentment against the members of that league for having involved them in such disaster, fell upon them, and killed many of them, reducing the hundred of the original band of 600, who had survived the muskets and spears of the Dayaks, to between thirty and forty. To add to their discomfiture, the Dutch officers came upon them and despoiled them of all the arms and plunder they had succeeded in bringing with them, and placed them under strict surveillance. The Dutch Government sent back to Kuching everything which was considered to be public or private property.[2]

[1] *Ten Years in Sarawak.* [2] Sir Spenser St. John, *op. cit.*

How many of the rebels were killed it has not been possible to estimate, but it could not have been far short of 1000. Sir Spenser estimates that 2000, of which half were women and children, escaped over the borders, but this is probably an under-estimate.

"It was the madness," wrote the Rajah, "the stark staring folly of the attempt that caused it to succeed. With mankind in general we may trust to their not doing anything utterly opposed to reason; but this rule does not hold good with the Chinese," who in their blindness of consequences become daring and audacious, and, when possessed of power, contemptuous of their adversaries, but who lose spirit on the first reverse.

April 15, witnessed the closing scene of the drama. A prahu gaily decorated with flags and the yellow umbrella, the symbol of authority, went up and down the river. A gong was beaten, and then a man, standing among the flags and umbrella, proclaimed peace, and announced that all danger was at an end, and that every one might now put away his arms.

On March 28, when peace had been restored, H.M.S. *Spartan* arrived, under Captain Sir William Hoste, from Singapore, with instructions to protect British lives and property, but with no orders to fire a gun, or to lend a marine or blue-jacket for the protection of the Sarawak Government. There was no knowing what the humanitarians at home might say, should a finger be held out to assist the Rajah. Those who lifted up their voices to justify the pirates might now espouse the cause of the Chinese, and again be loud in condemnation of the Rajah for having summarily suppressed the insurrection. There will always be found a man, as says Cordatus in Ben Jonson's *Every Man out of his Humour*, "who will prefer all countries before his native," and thinks every man right except an Englishman.

The Dutch Resident at Pontianak behaved very differently from the English authorities. He at once sent a gunboat and troops to Sarawak with offers of assistance, which, however, were not then required.

The rebellion was "the direct outcome of the loss of prestige and strength which followed the appointment of the Commission sent to try the Rajah for high crimes and misdemeanours, the favourable findings of which had never been brought home to the native mind by any act of reparation made by the British Government."[1] The Chinese knew that the Rajah had been left to his fate by his country, and, as *The Times* commented,—

had they (the Chinese) had the opportunity of reading recent debates in the British Parliament, their more subtle spirits might have received further encouragement from the belief that we were not only an ultra-peaceful, but an ultra-punctilious people, and that the cutting of Rajah Brooke's throat and the burning of the town might be considered matters beyond our cognizance, until the precise colonial status of Sarawak was determined, and whether a Kunsi Chinese (*sic*, Chinese Kongsi) was under the jurisdiction of any British court.

And, the *Daily News*, which through ignorance of the true circumstances had voiced the hostile opinion of the cranks against the Rajah in the matter of the suppression of the Saribas and Sekrang pirates, was candid enough to admit

having in the earlier part of Sir James Brooke's career felt it our duty to express our dissent from, and disapproval of, certain parts of his policy, we have sincere pleasure in proclaiming our unreserved admiration of the manner in which he must have exercised his power to have produced such fruits.

But it was precisely that part of his policy that had been condemned by Mr. Gladstone and the *Daily News* which had produced these present marked effects.

The condition of the Sarawak Government was now serious, and surrounded with difficulties. The revenue was gone. There was not a shred of a document extant to tell the tale of former times. So complete was the ruin that the Rajah had to wear native costume, which he borrowed here and there.

But there was a bright spot amid the gloom, in the devotion of the natives; their sympathy, their kindness, their entire willing-

[1] Sir Spenser St. John, *Rajah Brooke.*

ness to do what they could, are all balm to a wounded spirit. We have lost everything but the hearts of the people, and that is much to retain.[1]

The fidelity of the natives of all races and classes was exemplary. They everywhere took up arms to support the Rajah and their Government, and had the Chinese been twenty times as numerous, they would have been driven out.

The whole of the Rajah's private capital had been long ago exhausted, and how were the ruins to be cleared away and the Government buildings to be rebuilt? how were the servants of the State to be paid? Nevertheless the Rajah and his staff faced their difficulties with courage and confidence; but, deserted by the British Government, he was sorely tempted to appeal to that of another power. Happily, after a period of discouragement and resentment, he resolved to face his difficulties, relying only on himself and his few English assistants. He had on his right and left hand two stout and able men, his two nephews.

Within a short period many of the Chinese refugees, particularly those of the agricultural class, returned and rebuilt their old homes. Gradually their numbers were added to by others from over the border, from the Straits, and from China, until in time Upper Sarawak recovered its former prosperity. The severe lesson they had learnt, which had taught them how powerless they were to cope with the forces at the call of the Government, that were not represented merely by a handful of fortmen and policemen as they had blindly imagined, did not, however, deter them from forming another Hueh, which decreased and increased in strength in proportion to the number of people in the district. But the power of the Government has been steadily growing, and what chance the Hueh may have ever hoped to obtain of successfully opposing it has long ago vanished. Dangerous and mischievous, however, these secret societies can still be, unless vigilantly watched and swiftly suppressed, and the Chinese population in Upper Sarawak has since increased five-fold.

For years the Bau Hueh remained dormant, though it

[1] The Rajah to Mr. Templer.

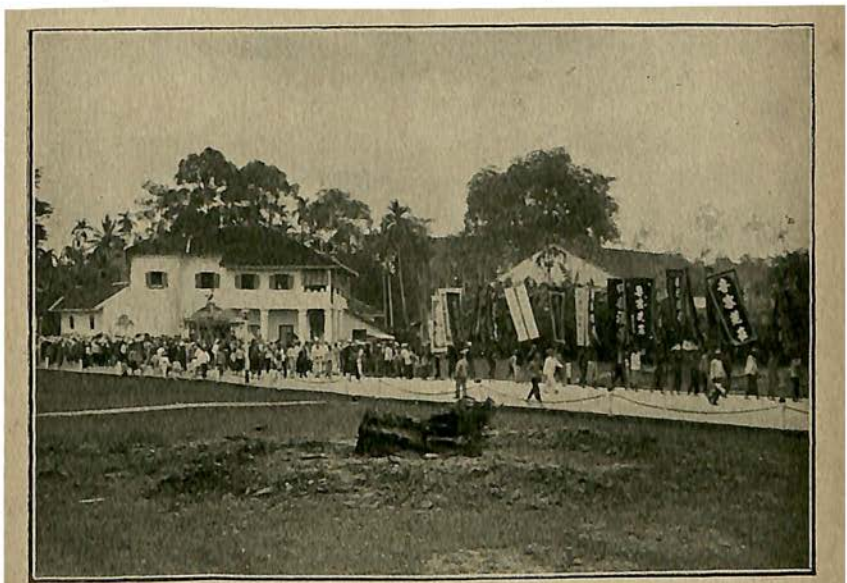
had a perfect organisation, but in 1869 it raised its hand in opposition to the Government, and barbarously murdered an informer. Mr. Crookshank, who was administering the Government in the absence of the present Rajah, took prompt and energetic measures, and all the head-men of the Hueh were arrested. They were condemned to long terms of imprisonment and to be flogged. When their terms had expired they were banished the country under a penalty of death should they return ; but the Hueh in Dutch Borneo, of which this was a branch, immediately re-organised the Society and appointed other office-bearers. Unfortunately the register and records of this Hueh could not be found. They had been cleverly concealed in the double-planked floor of a bedplace which had been overturned in the search.

In 1884-85, the Secret Society was in active revolt against the Dutch Government, which was at first only able to hold the rebels in check, not having sufficient forces to quell them. At Mandor, a large Chinese town, they killed the Dutch official in charge, and burnt down the Government buildings. After some hard fighting with great loss on both sides, Mandor was surrendered by the rebels, upon the false promise of an amnesty held out to them by the Sultan of Sambas. Finding themselves deceived, the Chinese again broke out in rebellion, and seized the important town of Mempawa, killing, amongst others, the Dutch officer in charge, and driving the Dutch troops back. But their triumph was short-lived, for upon the arrival of strong reinforcements the rebellion was quelled. .. One of the principal leaders, the man who had shot the Dutch controller of Mandor, was subsequently arrested in Sarawak, but rather than face his fate he hanged himself by his queue in his cell the day a Dutch gunboat had come round to fetch him.

In 1889, a secret society, allied with the Sam Tiam [1] or Ghee Hin Hueh, a branch of the Triad Society of China, was established at Segobang, the centre of a large district of Chinese pepper planters. This Hueh had been formed by criminals and expelled members of the Society from Mandor

[1] Three Dots.

and Montrado. Their primary intention was to raise another rebellion in Dutch territory, but they were banded by oath to exterminate *all people without queues*. On July 15, the houses of the chief and other known leaders were surrounded and searched, and the inmates arrested. The documents seized clearly showed the objects of the Society; that they had hundreds of men organised and ready for service; and that they were in correspondence with the

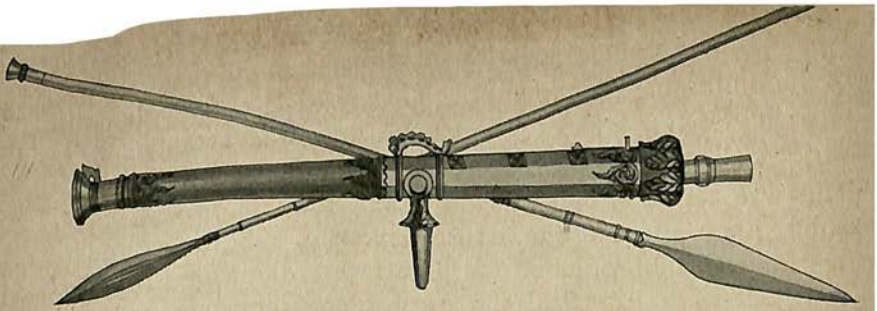


A CHINESE PROCESSION.

Ghee Hin Societies at Mandor and Singapore. Six of the leaders were executed, and eleven sentenced to penal servitude for life. One of the principals, who had taken a leading part in the Mandor rebellion of 1884, was handed over to the Dutch.

As late as 1906, one or two mysterious murders of Chinese in the Rejang aroused the suspicions of the authorities, and it was found that a secret society existed on that river. Valuable help was afforded the Government by anonymous letters sent by law-abiding Chinese containing minutely accurate information as to the members and their doings, which led to the arrest of many, and to the discovery

of incriminating documents. This Society was called the Golden Orchid or Lily Society, and was established at various places along the coast, from the Rejang to Simatan. This was also a branch of the Triad Society, professing the same great purpose, the reinstatement of the Ming dynasty in China, but in practice its objects were murder, robbery, and violence. Eight of the ringleaders were executed, and ten others sentenced to long terms of imprisonment.



MALAY CANNON (LELA) AND SPEARS.

CHAPTER VII

THE SHERIP MASAHOR

WHEN the Rajah assumed the Government of Sarawak, he had to look out for suitable officials among the Malays to carry on the Government, and suitable officials were not easily to be found where hitherto all had been corruption and oppression. There is not much choice in rotten apples.

There were three offices of importance to be filled: that of Datu Patinggi, he who had the supervision and control over the tribes on the left-hand branch of the river; that of Datu Bandar, he who held sway over those on the right hand; and the Datu Temanggong, who had to look after the tribes on the coast.[1]

It will be remembered that before the rebellion of the Sarawak people against the Government of Bruni these offices had been held by three of their chiefs, who, in 1841, were reinstated in their old positions by the Rajah, and made collectors of the revenue in their several districts.[2]

[1] In addition to their other duties in the capital. See list of titles, p. xi.
[2] See chap. iii. p. 77, for particulars of these Datus.

This was a tax levied on the head of a family of a bushel and a half of rice. Hitherto the officers of Government, the Bruni Pangirans great and small, had exercised the right of pre-emption of whatever the Dayak produced, and that at the prices they themselves fixed. Rajah Brooke modified, but could not wholly abolish, this privilege. He suffered these three officials, and them alone, to have the right to buy before all others what the Dayaks had to dispose of, but only at market price. With the others, the Datu Patinggi Gapur had been in disgrace under Rajah Muda Hasim and the Pangiran Makota. Any one who was looked on with an evil eye by that arch-scoundrel Makota had a claim to be regarded as an honest man, and for a while the Datu Patinggi did fairly well, but this was only till he had, as he thought, established himself firmly; and then he began to oppress the natives in the old way, by enforcing sales to himself on his own terms; and the timid people, accustomed to this sort of treatment, and afraid of the consequences should they protest, submitted without denouncing him to the Rajah. He was a man plausible and polite, and some time elapsed before the Rajah obtained sufficient evidence to convict him. But when he did, instead of deposing him from office, he announced his determination to pay each of these officials a fixed salary, in lieu of the enforced first trade with the Dayaks, and of their share in Dayak revenue.

The Datu Patinggi had a handsome daughter who was sought in marriage by a certain Sherip Bujang, brother of Sherip Masahor of Serikei, who had assumed the government of the Rejang river,[1] and had long been in league with the Saribas and Sekrang pirates—an evil-minded and intriguing man. The Rajah was very averse to this marriage, but could not forbid it. And the result was that Gapur and Masahor put their heads together, confided to each other their mutual grievances, and commenced plotting against the Rajah and his officers. Serikei is 20 miles up the

[1] The Datu Patinggi Abdul Rahman was the rightful Malay chief of the Rejang, and the Sultan's representative. Sherip Masahor had originally settled at Igan, which place, with the surrounding district, belonged to him. At Serikei he was an interloper. He usurped authority wherever he could do so, and the Sultan, whose power in the Rejang was but a shadow, was constrained to put up with the Sherip's pretensions.

Rejang river, which was not yet within the jurisdiction of Sarawak, but Saribas and Sekrang were, and Masahor was a source of annoyance and danger by incessantly fomenting agitation among the people of these rivers against the Rajah's government, and supplying them with powder and arms. For a while the Sadong district had been placed under the charge of the Datu Patinggi as well as his own, but it was found that, not satisfied with the salary paid by the Government in lieu of the right of pre-emption, he was enforcing that same right and using great oppression in both districts. The Tuan Besar, who was then administering the Government, went from Kuching to make a tour in both these, and to ascertain whether the rumours relative to the misconduct of Gapur were true, and by this means sufficient proof of his illegal exactions was obtained.

The Datu Patinggi had indeed pursued a course of oppression ever since 1851, when the marriage between Sherip Bujang and his daughter took place. He had levied imposts on the Sarawak Dayaks, forced trade on the Matu people, oppressed the Sadong Dayaks, and interfered at Lingga and Serikei, and had even proceeded so far as to assume the insignia of royalty by displaying a yellow (the royal colour) flag and unfurling a yellow umbrella. He was then, in November 1853, brought up in Court, publicly reprimanded, and made to disgorge his plunder. He submitted with outward tokens of good-will, but he had been publicly disgraced, and this he did not forget. His feeling against the Government of the White Man became more intensely bitter.

Early in 1854, the Rajah and Captain Brooke, the Tuan Besar, went up the Batang Lupar river to visit the Tuan Muda at Lingga, and Brereton at Sekrang; Mr. Spenser St. John was then at Kuching. This latter says:—

> One day, whilst sitting alone in my little cottage, the eldest son of the Temanggong, Abang Patah, came in to have a talk. He was one of the best of the Malay chiefs—frank, loyal, honest, brave as a lion. He subsequently lost his life gallantly defending the Rajah's Government.[1] I saw by his manner that he had something to

[1] This is incorrect. On more than one occasion he greatly distinguished himself

communicate, so after answering a few leading questions he said, "It is no use beating about the bush, I must tell you what is going on." He then unfolded the particulars of a plot which the Patinggi Gapur had concocted to cut off the Europeans in Sarawak. The Patinggi had confided his plans to the other chiefs, but they had almost unanimously refused to aid him, and had determined to keep a watch over his proceedings, but they had not the moral courage to denounce him to the Government. At length Abang Patah said, "I have become alarmed. The Rajah and Captain Brooke are away together. The Patinggi is with them with all his armed followers, and in an unsuspecting moment all the British officers might be cut off at a blow." I promised, as he desired, to keep his communication a secret from all but the Rajah, to whom I instantly wrote, giving not only Patah's story, but other indications which had come to my knowledge. An express boat carried my letter to its destination. The Rajah read the letter, and, without a word, passed it to Captain Brooke. The latter, having also read it, said, "What do you think?" "It is all too true," answered the Rajah, to whom conviction came like an inspiration. They had noticed some very odd proceedings on the part of the Patinggi, but, having no suspicions, had not been able to interpret some of his armed movements, but now it was quite clear that he was trying to get the Europeans together to strike one treacherous blow. Nothing, however, was said or done publicly. The faithful were warned to watch well, and a few judicious inquiries brought the whole story out.

The Commission had been despatched to sit at Singapore, on the conduct of the Rajah. Gapur was well aware that the British Government was indisposed to support the Rajah, and that there existed a body of opinion in England distinctly and bitterly hostile to him, and certain to apologise for any insurrectionary movement made to depose him, even if it involved, as Gapur supposed, his being massacred along with his English officers.

Mr. St. John goes on to say that upon his return to Kuching the Rajah intended to bring the Patinggi to justice for this contemplated act of treachery; but this was not done immediately. Before publicly convicting and punishing the leading chief of the State, amongst whose relations the Rajah could count so many staunch friends, it was thought advisable to wait for some overt act which would afford clear and convincing proof to all of the Datu's treachery.

fighting for the Government, especially at the time of the Chinese insurrection, but he died a natural death.

The Rajah had not long to wait. Towards the close of June he appointed chiefs over the various kampongs (districts) in Kuching, each to be responsible for the good order of his kampong, and with power to arrest evil-doers. These chiefs had been given their commissions publicly in Court; however, the Datu Patinggi promptly summoned them to his house, exacted the surrender of their commissions into his hands, and dismissed them with the remark that he was not going to allow everybody to be made a datu. This was open and public defiance, and the Rajah then determined to disgrace him publicly.

Measures were taken to prevent even a show of resistance being made. Though Gapur was head of the party that existed in favour of Bruni, and of a restoration to the old condition of affairs, yet in Kuching he had but few adherents upon whom he could safely rely, even amongst his own people; but Malays when forced into a corner often resort to desperate deeds of folly, and it was to guard against such an act that precautions were taken.

In a letter the Rajah describes both Gapur and what his proceedings were:—

As he got rich there was no keeping him straight. His abuse of power, his oppression of the people, his revival of ancient evils, his pretensions, his intrigues, and his free use of my name for purposes of his own, had been often checked but never abandoned, and ever recurring. Some time ago he was seriously warned, and made to disgorge some of his ill-gotten wealth; but this, instead of preventing him, only urged him forward, and he not only intrigued against the Government, but by threatening the better class of Sarawak people, thwarted our measures, and used language which was treasonable against every constituted authority.

I resolved, therefore, at once to degrade him from his office, so as to crush the seeds of discontent in the bud. I ordered a great public meeting of the country for an important business, but, excepting Captain Brooke, St. John, the Datu Bandar, Datu Temanggong, and a few others, no one in the country knew my object. The court was crowded, many hundreds being present. I gently explained the duty of the people towards the Government. I alluded to the past, the present happiness of all classes, and the crime committed by any one who failed in obedience to constituted authority, or desired to disturb the public peace. I pointed out

to the elders of the Kampongs that, having received authority from the Government, they should not have yielded it to the Patinggi, but at the same time I acquitted them of all evil intention, and declared—which was strictly true—that I knew their attachment to the Government.

I then turned to the Patinggi, I reminded him of the past, the warnings he had received and neglected. I detailed the charges against him, and concluded by saying, "I accuse you before the people of treason, and I give you the option of publicly declaring your submission to the Government or of death." He submitted. I then said, "I do not seek your life, for you are the Bandar's brother,[1] and have many relatives my friends. I do not confiscate your property, for your wives and children have not shared your offence. For the safety of the Kingdom I order you to sit in your place in this court, whilst proper persons bring to the fort all the arms and ammunition which belong to you." He sat quiet. I requested his relatives to go and bring the guns and powder, and, after a couple of hours, the things were brought. I then shook hands with the culprit, told him what I had done was for the good of the people, and that he should hear further from me through the proper channel. He then returned to his house.

There was still a difficulty to be overcome, how to get rid of him. The Rajah bethought himself of proposing a pilgrimage to Mecca, and Gapur jumped at it. This would remove him from Sarawak for some time, and, before his return, it was hoped his influence would be broken, and his opportunities of doing mischief be removed, through his position being given to his brother-in-law, the Datu Bandar.[2] The Bandar's brother was made the Imaum, the head of the Muhammadan priesthood, and was added to the list of the Rajah's trusted councillors. He remained true and a mainstay to English influence among the Malays in subsequent difficult times.[3] As to Gapur, on his return in 1856 from Mecca, now a Haji, he was repudiated by his relations, who refused to be responsible for his conduct, so that he had to be banished to Malacca. We shall hear of him again, but for the moment must look at the proceedings of the Sherip Masahor, whose brother had married the daughter of Gapur.

[1] An error—he was the Bandar's brother-in-law.

[2] He did not change his title. There has been no Datu Patinggi since.

[3] Haji Bua Hasan, who afterwards became Datu Bandar (*vide* Chap. III. p. 77). It was not until 1860 that he was raised to the rank of Datu under the title of the Datu Imaum.

Muka was then a town of considerable importance, at the mouth of the river of that name. It has since increased considerably, and is now as large as Bruni. Then, as now, it had a great trade in raw sago, which is shipped to Kuching, where it is converted into sago flour in the Chinese factories, in which form it passes to Singapore. Oya comes next in importance, then Bintulu, and then Matu and Bruit. These places supply more than half the world's consumption of sago. The trade in this had always been the principal one of Kuching until a few years ago, when pepper took the first place, but the sago trade is still increasing.

For years past numerous trading vessels from Kuching visited Muka to obtain this article of commerce, but in 1854 much difficulty had been felt in getting it, as at that time civil war was raging, and anarchy existed in Muka, so that trading vessels were debarred from entering the river, being liable to plunder by one party or the other.

The Pangiran Ersat had been placed there in authority by the Sultan, and he had oppressed the people incessantly. But beside him there was the Pangiran Matusin, his cousin, also of royal blood, who had been brought up among the Muka people, where he had many relations through his mother, who was of inferior class. A feud had long existed between these two Pangirans, both of whose houses were fortified. Ersat had expelled his cousin from Muka, but the latter had been allowed by the Sultan to return.

Matusin, though unprincipled himself,[1] could not countenance the extortions of the other, and he supported his own people against the injustice of his rival.

[1] His was a turbulent nature; a useful man in the time of trouble, but apt to be troublesome in the time of peace. He had some fine qualities, being brave and staunch, but even his best friend could not have called him honest. A well-built muscular man, never ruffled, and utterly impervious to fear, but somewhat cold-blooded—he was covered with the marks of old wounds. When Muka fort was built, he was appointed to be native Magistrate under the Resident, but he was removed in 1868, being unprincipled, dishonest, and unjust (to quote the present Rajah). He was invaluable in dealing with the turbulent Dayaks in the upper waters of the Rejang, as they absolutely feared him, but he could not keep his hands clean, and had to be removed from Baleh in 1876, when he was pensioned and placed out of harm's way at a little village near Santubong. He was a staunch supporter of Government and a hard fighter in helping to maintain it; he died some twenty years ago.

On one occasion, as Matusin was returning home from the river mouth, he passed the abode of Ersat, when this latter, with his followers and relatives, mocked him from the platform in front of the long house, brandishing their spears and daring him to attack them. Matusin was filled with rage. Of all things that a Malay can least endure is insult. Seizing his arms, he rushed into the house, and, running amuck, cut down Ersat himself, and, in the promiscuous onslaught that followed, killed one of the Pangiran's daughters and wounded another. He then made his way forth, no one daring to oppose him, as he was a man of prodigious strength. On reaching his house, he strengthened the fortifications and prepared for an attack. In the course of a month, a large force had assembled in Muka to avenge the death of Pangiran Ersat, led by the Sherip Masahor, who had called out the Saribas Dayaks, under the jurisdiction of the Rajah of Sarawak, as well as the Kanowit Dayaks on the Rejang. They numbered more than a thousand, exclusive of Malays.

This host surrounded the fortified house of Matusin, and Masahor, in the name of the Rajah, called upon the former to surrender. He undertook, if Matusin and his followers would come forth, with all the women and children, and give themselves up, that their lives would not only be spared, but that thenceforth they should all dwell together in amity. It was agreed that this was to take place on the following morning. But during the night a member of Masahor's party managed to get into the house of Matusin to warn him that treachery was intended, and to urge him to escape. This Matusin did in the dark, attended by six men only; he fled up country, and made his way to Kuching, where he threw himself on the protection of the Rajah. Next day Sherip Masahor, with his ruffians, took most who remained in Matusin's house, and many of the relations of the Muka chiefs who had supported him, to the number of forty-five, chiefly women, massacred every one, and gave their heads to his Saribas and Kanowit followers. As soon as the news reached Kuching, the Tuan Muda was sent to Muka to inquire into matters. He says: "The scene where the

murders took place was then fresh with the marks of the slaughtered wretches. Their torn clothes, the traces of blood and tracks of feet, were plainly visible on the ground. In pulling up through the Muka village, most of the houses were burnt down, and the graveyards pillaged by Dayaks." Melanaus adorn their dead with costly gold ornaments, which are buried with the bodies; this the Dayaks knew; to attain these and the heads of the dead were their object in desecrating the graves.

The people had lost their favourite leader and relative, Pangiran Matusin; besides relations they had lost their homes and property, burnt and pillaged by Masahor's followers on the ground that the owners had favoured the slayer of Pangiran Ersat, and they were well aware that they themselves were doomed, and all would most surely have been put to death but for the arrival of the Tuan Muda. And now the poor creatures surrounded him, and implored that an Englishman might be sent to govern the place, and deliver them from the tyranny of the Bruni officials. Having seen to the safety of Matusin's wife and children, who, with other surviving relations and followers, were sent to Kuching, the Tuan Muda returned to Sekrang. A fine was imposed on Sherip Masahor, and he was forced to release 100 captives, and was deposed from his governorship for having called out the Saribas under Sarawak rule for war-like purposes. He was in league with the piratical party in the Saribas, and not only supplied them with salt, which is an absolute necessity to a Dayak, and which it was now difficult to obtain on the Sarawak side, where the markets were closed to them, but also with ammunition, and in other ways encouraged them in their opposition to the Government. He left Serikei immediately, fearing further consequences.

A party of malcontent Saribas Dayaks had been induced by the Sherip to settle in the Serikei river, to be handy agents for the execution of his oppressive exactions, and the intrepid Penglima Seman was sent by the Rajah to drive them out. This he did very effectually, and destroyed their houses and stores. Shortly afterwards the Datu Temanggong and the Datu Imaum dispersed a flotilla of some forty Saribas

bangkongs which they had met in the main river below Serikei.

The unsatisfactory condition of affairs in the Muka and adjacent districts led the Rajah to pay another visit to Bruni, and thither he sailed in June, 1855, after having despatched the Tuan Muda to Muka. He went up in his little gun-boat, the *Jolly Bachelor*, alone, and with no retinue, no longer holding high offices under the Crown, "the castaway of his own country." But he was most cordially received, and entertained with due honours by the Sultan, by the Rajahs of both the hostile factions, and by the people. All saw in the Rajah the possible instrument to relieve them of the dissensions with which Bruni was troubled, and which now verged upon civil war. Of the opposing factions, which had existed ever since the days of Pangiran Usop, one party, and by far the most powerful, was led by the Pangiran Anak Hasim, the late Sultan's reputed son (who became Sultan in 1885), and this party was in opposition to the Sultan, who had lost the support of nearly all his people by becoming the tool of his cunning and grasping minister, Pangiran Makota. "Trade had become a monopoly and thus been extinguished; the exactions on the coast to the northward had produced dissatisfaction and rebellion; the unfortunate people of Limbang, which country is the granary of Bruni, was reduced to extremity, cruelly plundered by Makota and his sons, and attacked by the Kayans, sometimes at the instigation of Makota, sometimes on their own account; in short, what Sarawak was formerly, Bruni was now fast becoming; and when I pulled into the city in my little gun-boat of thirty-five tons, four of the Kampongs had their guns loaded and pointed against each other." Such was the unhappy condition of the country as described by the Rajah.

The day after his coming the rival parties disarmed their fortifications. The Sultan and the Rajahs placed the government in his hands, with a request that he would endeavour to establish it on a proper and firm basis, and promised obedience to all his directions.

Makota was absent, having been ordered by the Sultan to Muka to look into matters there, which meant that he

had been sent to plunder the people of that and the neighbouring districts, but, though it angered the Rajah, it rendered his task the easier.

Makota was now the sole minister, and the Rajah arranged that the old executive system should be restored so as to counterbalance his influence. The offices of the four ministers of State, or wazirs, established by the ninth Sultan Hasan, early in the seventeenth century, were revived; these were the Temanggong, the Bandahara, the di Gedong, and the Pemancha. Though of ancient origin, by the will of autocratic Sultans they had been in abeyance for many years, and their revival gave confidence to nobles and people alike. They were never allowed again to lapse.

Besides the above-mentioned functionaries, there are eight ministers of the second class, all nobles; and lastly, a council of twelve officers of state, chosen from among the leading people, the chiefs of the different divisions or parishes of the city. These chiefs being elected by the people renders this council representative.

Pangiran Anak Hasim became the Pangiran Temanggong. Though stern, he was popular, governed well and fairly, and encouraged trade. His only brother, the other doubtful son of Sultan Omar Ali, was made the Pamancha. Now that the Rajah had succeeded in reconciling the hostile factions, he trusted that the Pangiran Temanggong, with the assistance of the other wazirs, supported by his own pledge to uphold them, with force if necessary, against all disturbers of peace, would be able to preserve the Sultan from the evil influence of Makota; indeed the Sultan had a desire to act rightly, and his disposition was not altogether bad, but avariciousness was his failing, and the means by which his evil counsellors gained his ear.

The Rajah was pressed to take up his residence in Bruni, and, could he have done so, all might have gone well, but he could not hope that his present intervention would do more than postpone the downfall of the worn-out and vicious Government, for the elements of discord and decay were rife. And directly his back was turned the Sultan failed him. He set aside the advice of his wazirs, and, to

gratify his greed, upheld Makota." He had promised that this man should be recalled from Muka, but, instead of doing so, gave him a free hand to deal with the wretched people as he pleased—to plunder for both himself and his master. The Rajah then determined himself "to manage Makota, and to leave the Sultan to rue his own folly"; the two factions in Bruni he trusted "would join together to resist oppression, or, at any rate, forbear with each other."

Early in 1856, the Tuan Muda went with a force from Kuching to erect a fort at Serikei, now deserted by Masahor, and half burnt down by the Dayaks. This was soon built, and an Englishman was placed in charge, who was shortly afterwards replaced by Mr. Fox. The Dayaks around were numerous and hostile. The Tuan Muda found that "in all directions around Serikei and Kanowit there were enemies." Some few came to trade, but refused to pay revenue or obey the orders of the officials. They lived in independence, and the two branches of Dayak employment were simply heads and salt. "As these two requirements could not be found in the same quarter, they in former times usually made peace with one petty Malay chief for the purpose of obtaining salt, while the heads were brought from some other petty Malay chief's village lying in another direction. By this means the Malays obtained a trade with Dayaks as well as a following."

The imposition of a fine on Masahor and the erection of a fort at Serikei may have been regarded as an infringement of the rights of the Sultan. There existed, however, an understanding between the Sultan and the Rajah in respect to the Rejang, the main object of which was, so far as the former was concerned, that the sago districts should be protected from the ravages of the Rejang Dayaks. The Sultan Mumin, a poor, feeble creature, was totally incapable of keeping these unruly subjects of his in check, and the Rajah undertook to do it for him. It, of course, followed that the Rajah had authority over, and a right to punish, these people. Kanowit fort and then Serikei were erected to keep the Dayaks and Sherip Masahor in check. All that was done was done in the mutual interests of Bruni and

Sarawak, and at the sole expense of the latter, for the Rejang in those days yielded no revenue.

The house of Ucalegon was in flames, and the fire would extend to Sarawak, unless it were extinguished by Sarawak hands, for their own protection.

Muka and Oya, where Pangiran Nipa had succeeded his father, Pangiran Ersat, in power, being still in a very distracted condition, and the Rajah, now being free of the troubles that had shaken the very foundations of his own Government, and which had unavoidably withdrawn his attention from these places, determined to make another effort to establish order there in the interests of the suffering population, and of the important trade between those places and Sarawak, which had now almost ceased. For this purpose he again proceeded to Bruni in September, 1857, and obtained full power to act at Muka, and authority to intervene was granted him. At Muka the Rajah called together into his presence the rival factions which had been murdering each other, and disturbing the trade for the last four years. There were four hundred persons present, including the Pangirans Matusin and Nipa, besides the chiefs of the country, whose relatives had been put to death by Sherip Masahor. The *chaps*[1]—the Sultan's mandates—were read, ordering peace, and authorising the Rajah to punish any breach of it. The Rajah then spoke to the people, pointing out the advantage of peace, and pledging himself to punish any persons who by their actions should disturb it. This visit of the Rajah was attended with good results, and Muka enjoyed rest for a brief period.

In October, the Rajah proceeded to England, leaving the government in the hands of the Tuan Besar; upon this visit, which was of necessity a prolonged one, owing to the complete breakdown of his health, we will touch later.

The month following the Rajah's departure, Pangiran Makota was violently removed from the scene of his life's iniquities. We have already recorded the manner of his well-merited death.[2] Of him the Rajah wrote, "A greater

[1] Chap (Hindústání) meaning a seal. Hence a firman, edict, licence, grant.
[2] See Chap. III. p. 87.

villain it would be impossible to conceive, with heart blacker, head more cunning, and passions more unrestrained. I say this deliberately of a dead man." A fitting epitaph.

In December, Mrs. Brooke died, and the Tuan Besar left for England early in 1859. Upon the Tuan Muda now fell the burden of the government at perhaps the most critical period in the history of the raj. Plot was heaped upon plot, and deceit and treachery faced him on all sides, but by his courage, untiring energy, and determination the State was successfully piloted through these grave troubles, its enemies dispersed, and confidence restored to a panic-stricken people.

Two years previously, Sherip Masahor and the Datu Patinggi Haji Gapur, now known as the Datu Haji, had been pardoned. The former had been allowed to return to Serikei, and the latter to live in retirement at Kuching. It was a mistaken and highly imprudent policy, for neither had forgotten his humiliation, and both commenced active intrigue against the Government; and the party of pangirans at Bruni, hostile to all reforms, were privy to these plots, of which the Sultan himself was aware, and at which he probably connived. Constant intercourse was being kept up between the Sultans of Bruni and Sambas, which could omen no good to Sarawak; and Bruni alone, now once more relapsed into its former evil condition, was without the means of open aggression.

In 1859, the Europeans in Sarawak were startled by a report of the wholesale massacre of Europeans, men, women, and children, at Banjermasin, succeeded by further reports that all white men were being killed in the other Dutch settlements, and that the same fate was to be meted out to those in Sarawak and Labuan.

In March, the Tuan Muda, owing to disquieting rumours having reached him, resolved upon making a tour to the different stations on the coast, and first visited the Rejang. At Serikei he was joined by Mr. Fox, and then proceeded to Kanowit, a hundred miles up the broad Rejang river. The village and fort together formed a picturesque piece of irregularity and dilapidation. Here were settled a few Malays, a gang of cut-throats who lived by swindling the

Dayaks, and stood by the fort as their only means of security. Some few Chinese traders had ventured to settle in the place, but they were a mob of rapscallions. Above the village was the mouth of the Kanowit river, and on the opposite bank of this river was the large village of the Kanowit tribe, adherents of Sherip Masahor. The Kanowit, as well as the Poi and Ngmah, two branches of the main river above Kanowit, was inhabited by Sea-Dayaks from the Batang Lupar and Saribas, unfriendly to the Government. Mr. Steele had been in charge of Kanowit for eight years. It was a vastly solitary place for an Englishman during the north-east monsoon. For three or four months of the year no communication was to be had with Kuching, owing to the strong freshes and heavy seas on the coast; but Mr. Steele had grown so accustomed to the life that he would not have exchanged it for another. The fort had been often attempted both secretly and openly, people close around had been killed, and Mr. Steele had met with several narrow escapes. His fortmen were not of the best class, but they were of his own selection. The Tuan Muda felt uneasy about the place. "There was too smooth an appearance, without any substantial base." There were no reliable Malay chiefs; and he left Mr. Fox to support Mr. Steele.

On his return to Serikei, the Tuan Muda received letters from the Sarawak traders at Muka saying that it was useless their attempting to procure sago there, as the country was in commotion, war being carried on between Pangiran Matusin and Pangiran Nipa, and they entreated his support and aid; otherwise the trade must be stopped. Not only so, but the Sarawak flag had been fired on by a badly-disposed pangiran. This was an insult that could not be passed over, and the Tuan Muda at once proceeded to Muka in the *Jolly Bachelor*. As he passed Igan, the Sherip Masahor, who had a residence there also, pushed off and asked leave to join him. His object was not obvious, but he protested sincere friendship, and a desire to see trade re-established.

On reaching Muka it was found that the place was in a most disturbed state, and that everybody was armed. A demand was at once made that Pangiran Serail, who had

fired on the Sarawak flag, should be fined, and to this the Pangiran Nipa consented.

Towards the close of the day, a message came from Pangiran Matusin begging me to proceed to his assistance as soon as possible, as that night there was some probability of Nipa's party taking his fortification, which was defended by twenty-six men only against about six hundred, who had built movable stockades all around, and were gradually closing on him each night, and were now within about fourteen yards of his house. We warped up and arrived late at night, and let go our anchor off Matusin's landing-place. It was the 27th night of the Mahomedan fast month, and the place being brilliantly illuminated, blazed out as strange a looking pile of fortifications and habitations as it has ever fallen to my lot to witness. Matusin came aboard and showed his gratitude more by manner than by words. He was thin and haggard, and said, "Tuan, I thought I should have been a dead man to-night, as they intended adding to the illumination by the blaze of my house, but I did not fear death, and would never have run away."

On the first appearance of light we were all up, and ready to proceed to work, in order to have the business over as soon as possible. Our gunboat's deck was crowded with armed men, and the bulwarks were closed in around by oars and logwood. The first step we took was to dislodge a floating battery, placed so as to guard Matusin's landing. After destroying this I sent a party to pull down the other stockades, numbering some twenty-five of all shapes and sizes. Pangiran Matusin's fort was being pulled down also, and before mid-day there was a clearance and change in the aspect of affairs.

Excuses were then made for the payment of the fine. The gunboat was promptly hauled up in front of Pangiran Nipa's house, "and the muzzle of our 6-pounder was looking upwards loaded and primed. It would have been close quarters if we had played with fire-arms, as we could jump from the deck to the banks." The Sherip Masahor was with the Tuan Muda, and professed the most ardent friendship and desire to assist. The fine was soon paid, and after seeing Pangiran Matusin safely on his way to Kuching the Tuan Muda left for Saribas.

Trade with Muka during the remaining months of the year was brisk; matters there settled down quietly; and Pangiran Nipa kept up a friendly correspondence with the Tuan Muda.

The Pangiran Serail, who had been fined, was an envoy of the Sultan Mumin; he returned to Bruni, gave a plausible account of his conduct, and loudly complained of the conduct of the Tuan Muda. The Sultan was irritated, and Mr. St. John, who was now British Consul-General at Bruni, heard only Serail's story, and considered the proceedings high-handed and reprehensible. He afterwards expressed his opinion that it was so to both the Tuan Muda and to the Rajah. Thereupon the latter ordered the fine to be paid over to the Sultan "as a peace offering."

Sir Spenser St. John, in his *Life of Rajah Brooke*, speaks of the interference in Muka in 1858 and 1859 as unjustifiable, but we have already shown that the Rajah had received full authority from the Sultan to act in Muka, and what was done was entirely in the cause of peace and order, though Sir Spenser does not question the motives.

In the following June, when on a visit to Sekrang, the startling news was brought to the Tuan Muda that Steele and Fox had been killed, and that Kanowit was in the hands of enemies and murderers. It was the first stroke of a foul conspiracy, which had as its objects the extermination of all the Europeans and the overthrow of the Government. But it had been struck too soon. The aim of the conspirators, "deep and subtle as men or devils could be," was to strike simultaneous blows in Kuching and the out-stations, and this premature action of Sherip Masahor's party before the Datu Haji Gapur, Bandar Kasim, and other conspirators were prepared to act led to the original scheme being broken up into disconnected action. This to some extent lessened the difficulties with which the Tuan Muda found himself confronted. As yet he could but conjecture as to the compass of the conspiracy, and could only suspect the conspirators, but he was on his guard, and he prepared for the worst.

A few words may be said here with regard to the situation generally, and the attitude of the population. From Muka, the Sherip Masahor, the friend and connection of Pangiran Nipa, could look for strong support. In the Rejang he had on his side the Kanowits, the Banyoks, and

the Segalangs, the last a hot-headed and treacherous people, who had always been the Sherip's most active partisans, and were afterwards his only sympathists; upon the Dayaks it was naturally thought he could count, but, as regards those of the Kanowit, events proved this to be a mistake; amongst the Melanaus of the delta he had a strong following at Igan, Matu, and Bruit, but not at the other villages; and the Malays of Serikei feared and obeyed him, though from their chiefs downwards they hated him. The Kalaka Malays, under a bad leader, were very doubtful. Those in Saribas were held in check by the Dayaks, who had been converted by the Tuan Muda from stout enemies into staunch friends; the Sea-Dayaks generally were as true as steel to their white chief, though some were led astray. The Sekrang Malays were faithful, but the Lingga Malays had allowed themselves to be awed by letters that had been sent them by the conspirators, calling upon them to assist in killing the English or to expect the consequences. Though they received these letters they made no response to the overtures, and were at heart with the Government. Sadong, where there had been no English officer for some time, was, under the Bandar Kasim, a hot-bed of anarchy, and here were the Datu Haji's principal adherents, as also were the Land-Dayaks of Lundu.

In Kuching and its neighbourhood the Malays were as usual loyal, from their Datus, the Bandar, Imaum (whose sister the Datu Haji had married) and the old fighting Temanggong downwards. Here the Datu Haji had a small clique only, but men's minds were becoming disturbed by the baneful rumours that were being sedulously spread about of the impending downfall of the Government. It was brought home to their minds, and insisted on, that the Rajah had forfeited the confidence of the British Government, which was prepared to leave him to his fate. No more men-of-war had been sent to Sarawak, and no help had been offered the Rajah for the suppression of the Chinese insurrection; all this exercised a bad influence on some who wavered, though at heart loyal, and it discouraged the faint-hearted, just as it encouraged hopes in the dis-

affected Malay chiefs and the Sherips that they might recover their lost supremacy. Any signal reverse to the Government, or any indecision shown by it, would have produced the gravest consequences, which must have resulted, however the issue went, in the ruin of the country. The crisis was critical, and without a strong man at the helm, disaster would have followed—a leader to counterbalance the influence of the conspirators—a leader for the loyal to rally around and to inspire the timid, was wanted, and was at hand.

Upon receiving news of the disaster at Kanowit, after having despatched an express to Mr. Watson in Saribas to be strictly on his guard, the Tuan Muda at once proceeded to Kuching. There an assembly of all the chiefs and head men was held, and to them, with a sword in front of him, he declared his stern resolution that there should be no haven for the murderers of his officers and friends. Before he left Kuching, Abang Ali, of Serikei,[1] had arrived direct from Kanowit; he reported the whole place to be burnt down and deserted, and that the murderers had left; and he was able to give a full account of the tragedy.

One afternoon, as Mr. Fox was superintending the digging of a ditch, and Mr. Steele was walking about inside the fort, both unarmed, they were attacked, Steele by two men, Abi and Talip, whom he had known and trusted, though their previous characters had been extremely bad. Talip drew his sword and struck at Steele, but the latter, being an active man, seized the weapon, whereupon Abi cut him down, killing him immediately.

At the same moment a party of Kanowits, led by their chiefs, Sawing and Sakalai, rushed out of a Chinaman's house, in which they had been concealed, and killed Mr. Fox. Sawing and Sakalai struck the first blows, followed by many others, for his body was terribly mutilated, as was also that of Steele. They then proceeded to rifle the fort, the garrison

[1] A young man then, and one of the well disposed Malay chiefs of Serikei. He shortly afterwards became the principal native officer in the Rejang, a position which he held until his death in 1874. He earned the fullest confidence of the Government, and the respect not only of his own people, but of the Dayaks, Kayans, and other tribes.

offering no resistance, except at the commencement, when the sentry fired and killed one of the murderers.

After a stay of a few days in Kuching, organising his party, the Tuan Muda proceeded with the *Sarawak Cross*[1] and *Jolly Bachelor* to the Rejang river. At Rejang he learnt from Abang Ali that Tani, the chief of the Banyoks, who, to cover his tracks, was the first to report the murders to the Tuan Muda at Sekrang, though not actively participating, had been a principal speaker inciting to the murders. He learnt further that Penglima Abi and Talip, two of the actual assassins, had gone straight to Sherip Masahor, had apprised him of their deed, and had told him the country was now his own. The Sherip promptly killed Abi, but Talip escaped and went to Bruni, where he complained that the Sherip wanted to kill him to prevent him from telling the white men that it was his (the Sherip's) order that Fox and Steele should be put to death. Other conspirators on arriving at Serikei were also put to death by the Sherip.

Abang Ali was at once despatched to Serikei in a fast boat, the Tuan Muda following in the schooner *Sarawak Cross*. He was to put to death all those at Serikei who were proved to have been guilty of complicity in the murder of Fox and Steele. He found that the Malays who had been accessories, under the Penglima Abi, had decamped and fortified themselves in a creek, there he attacked and slew them; the few who had remained were seized and krised.[2]

Tani was caught and executed, though he protested his innocence, and on being conveyed to death declared solemnly, "I am not guilty, before long the true culprits will be discovered." It is perhaps to be regretted that his life was not spared on condition of revealing the prime movers of the plot. The case was most carefully investigated by the Tuan Muda before sentence was passed, and the words he employed on his way to execution showed that he had a knowledge of the conspiracy.

Mr. St. John more than hints that Tani was innocent. But at the time he was not in Sarawak, but at Bruni, and

[1] A schooner belonging to the S.P.G. Mission.
[2] The national method of execution.

did not again visit the Rejang. There the justness of the execution of Tani has never been questioned, even by his son, Buju, who succeeded him, and he was always spoken of as one of the most active instigators of the murders. The Malays who were in charge of the fort were also put to death for surrendering it without a shred of resistance to the assassins, and allowing it to be plundered of arms and ammunition, and everything it contained, and to be set on fire. It was complicity, and not cowardice; and poor Steele had been unwise in his selection of fortmen.

The Tuan Muda had brought the Datu Haji Gapur along with him,[1] not deeming it prudent to leave him in Kuching unwatched, and now at Serikei the Sherip Masahor came on board, and expressed his earnest desire to accompany him up the river, and assist in the pursuit of the assassins who had fled. He was urgent that his own armed men should surround the Tuan Muda and act as bodyguard, but the offer was prudently declined.

This man was deeply suspected, but I could not find a clue, or a tittle of evidence through which he might be brought to trial. I thought all in this large river were more or less implicated, but we could not put all to death, though conspiracy was rife. Some were originators and instigators, some again the active workers; others merely dupes, and some again only listeners, but none talebearers. So my course was to meet the Sherip in a friendly manner without a shadow of suspicion on my brow, and as he sat on one chair, I sat on another within a foot of him. He had his sword, I had mine; both had equally sharpened edges.

There were also present on deck a guard of armed blunderbuss men, and the redoubtable old Subu,[2]

although I beckoned him away, he would take up his seat close to me, with his gigantic sword at his waist. We sat and talked cordially

[1] From a letter from the Tuan Muda to his uncle, giving an account of these events, it is, however, evident that Haji Gapur had wheedled himself into the Tuan Muda's good graces, and had to a large extent regained his confidence. The Haji begged to be with him, and was taken.

[2] A Singapore Malay, better known as Inchi Subu. He was one of the Malay sailors engaged by the Rajah to serve on the *Royalist* when he first arrived at Singapore. He was remarkable for his size and strength. He became personal orderly to the late Rajah; and afterwards to the present Rajah, and was also the executioner. A brave and trustworthy man, he was generally popular with Europeans as well as natives. He died some years ago.

on various topics, and he (the Sherip) particularly recommended every precaution, as he said he feared badly-disposed men were about. So after an hour of this hollow friendship we separated, he going on shore again. What would he not have given for my head!

The executions previously done by Masahor had been to get rid of awkward witnesses to his having been an instigator of the crime.

Something had already been done, but much more yet remained. My wish was to punish those immediately implicated, before touching the instigators. I could only get at the former by the assistance of the latter.

I felt apprehensive that I should have difficulties with my own people after they had witnessed such severe proceedings, but was determined to carry out my original resolve, and permit nothing to shake me. I felt, while in this state, no more fear of danger or death than of washing my hands in the morning. A man with arms constantly about him, and death staring him in the face, soon loses the sensation of what people improperly style nervousness. An express boat was despatched to Kanowit for the remains of our late friends, and they were buried at Serikei near the fort.[1]

The Tuan Muda lingered at Serikei as long as he could, waiting for the Sekrang force, but as there were no signs of its coming he pushed on to Kanowit, "where there was nothing to be seen but black desolation. The poles and some fragments of the old houses were left, but nothing else. The place looked as if it had been blighted by evil spirits."

"Here he was informed that the Kanowits and others under Sawing and Sakalai, two of the principals in the raid on Kanowit, had retired up the Kabah, a branch stream of the Rejang a short distance above, and had strongly fortified themselves there. Hundreds of Dayaks from the Kanowit river now came and placed themselves at the Tuan Muda's disposal, but they were his quondam enemies, and were but doubtful friends. To test their professions of loyalty the Tuan Muda ordered them to proceed to attack the enemy's fortification, and should they fail to take it they were to surround it, so as to prevent the enemy decamping, and to await his arrival. In the morning they left to execute this order.

Two days the Tuan Muda waited for his Sekrang rein-

[1] Afterwards re-interred in the Kuching cemetery.

forcements, whilst the Malays were busy erecting a new fort, and then a young Dayak chief from the advance party arrived with the information that they had failed in their attack on the stockades, and had lost some killed and many wounded, but they had obeyed the Tuan Muda's instructions, and had taken up positions out of range all round the enemy's position —they begged that he would speedily come to their assistance. They thus proved that their hearts were well inclined; and these were the people that the Tuan Muda had so severely punished three years previously.

Accordingly early next morning, the Tuan Muda, without waiting for the reinforcements, started up-stream in the *Jolly Bachelor* with a small party, and joined the Dayak force, which he now felt that he might trust. The Dayaks willingly took one of the 6-pounders and the ammunition out of the gunboat, and, leaving her in charge of the Datu Temanggong, the Tuan Muda marched inland, with a body-guard of only forty Malays, and these, though otherwise trustworthy, not the best kind of warriors. With the exception of Penglima Seman and Abang Ali he had no reliable leaders.

The enemy's position was reached at 1 P.M., and it looked an ugly place to take. The Dayaks had built huts around, and they now numbered some three thousand. A stockade was erected 300 yards from the fortification, the gun mounted, and a summons sent to surrender Sawing, Sakalai, and others deeply compromised in the murder of Steele and Fox. This was refused, and the gun opened fire, which was returned, but the rebels' shot went high and told amongst the Dayaks in the rear. After forty-five rounds had been fired darkness set in. The chief, Sawing, had been heard giving directions right and left. He had previously sent a message to the Tuan Muda to say that he awaited his arrival and would slaughter all his followers—the Malays—for he did not regard the Dayaks as his enemies. And he had reason for this, for these Dayaks had before been hand-in-glove with the Sherip; but they had turned, and that at a time when an opportunity offered of possible retaliation for the punishment formerly inflicted upon them.

In the dusk of the evening a few of our party spoke to the enemy, who had suffered much from our shot, and were, they said, willing to come to terms. It was now an impossibility, as our force of Dayaks would be uncontrollable, and I would never receive them except to hang them all, *minus* the women and children. I did not trust much to their hollow words, so despatched a party to bring up more ammunition in the morning. The night closed in quiet and tranquil. Next morning, my wish was to interfere so as to save the women and children, if possible, and I despatched a messenger within speaking distance of the house, to demand the Government arms and goods that had been taken from the Kanowit fort. After some time a few dollars and old muskets were given up; then I sent to tell the women and children to leave. They replied that they were afraid of the Dayaks. So, after giving them a certain time, and knowing that then further delay was useless, I ordered Abang Ali to advance and take the house if he could. The fellows rushed on, yelling terribly. I kept our small Malay force together in the stockade with Penglima Seman, as a panic might arise among them, and the besieged become desperate, and charge us; so the gun was ready with grape and canister to be discharged at a moment's notice.

After a furious attack, the stockade was entered, and there was desperate fighting within between those defending it and those entering by climbing the poles that sustained it. Then fire was applied, and both ends of the building kindled and began to blaze furiously.

Now came the horror of war indeed. Some were burnt, some killed, some taken prisoners, and some few escaped. So ended that fortification. Its roof fell with a crash, leaving only its smoking embers to tell where it had stood. Our Dayaks were mad with excitement, flying about with heads; many with frightful wounds, some even mortal.

Unhappily the leading murderers escaped; they succeeded in cutting their way through the attacking force. The Tuan Muda's party suffered heavily, and about thirty-five Dayaks were killed by poisoned arrows. The puncture shows no larger than if it had been made by a pin. Drowsiness ensues, and death follows in half an hour. One of the Malays, who was thus wounded, was saved by being given a glass of brandy, and being kept to his feet, walking, in spite of his entreaties to be allowed to lie down and sleep. Sakalai's wife

and some of the women were saved, and were sent to their friends.

After remaining some time at Kanowit to establish confidence among the Dayaks, and to set a guard in the new fort, of which Abang Ali was placed in charge, the Tuan Muda returned to Kuching, stopping on his way at Serikei, when again Sherip Masahor dissembled, and received him with marked respect and attention; he subsequently learnt that this visit was near being his last to any one on earth. At Kuching the Tuan Muda was welcomed by his countrymen, the Malays and Chinese, with every honour; what he had effected had gladdened the hearts of all, but the troubles were not at an end.

The rumours we have mentioned of the massacre of Europeans in Dutch Borneo had caused extreme disquiet amongst the natives generally, and the murders of Steele and Fox led them to believe that the fate wherewith all Europeans were threatened was to overtake those in Sarawak as well, and that the Bruni Rajahs were about to resume possession of the country. Reports calculated to disturb the minds of the people were diligently spread, and one, which came from Bruni, was that the Queen of England was so incensed against the Rajah that she had ordered his execution, and that his life was spared only by the intervention of the Sultan.

A deep and intricate plot had been formed, the active principals in Sarawak being the Sherip Masahor, the Datu Haji, and the Bandar Kasim, and trustworthy intelligence was subsequently received that they were being backed up by the Bruni Government, or rather the dominant party there, by whom an agent had been despatched along the coast to extort goods from the natives, and to communicate with the Sherip, to whom a kris was presented with which the white men in Sarawak were to be put to death. There was unity of action, moreover, between the conspirators and their friends in Western or Netherlands Borneo, and of this the Dutch were aware. They had early intelligence of the plotting, and warned the Sarawak Government. But the precipitate action at Kanowit and the subsequent proceedings of

the Tuan Muda had for a time hindered the conspirators, and rendered it necessary for them to dissemble, even to the extent of sacrificing some of their own supporters, which served a double purpose—to throw off suspicion from themselves, and to silence dangerous tongues. But within a short time they were again active, though lack of concerted action, as in the case of so many other conspiracies designed to act simultaneously at various points, led to failure, through too great precipitation of some of the plotters.

The Datu Haji was the first to commence. He had remained at Serikei when the Tuan Muda left that place on his return from Kanowit, and his object in accompanying the Tuan Muda there was, while professing loyalty, to deliberate with the Sherip. On his return to Kuching he proceeded to Lundu, and there incited the Land-Dayaks to insurrection, telling them that 2000 white men had already been killed, and the rest were to be cut off immediately; he further threatened the Dayaks that if they did not become Muhammadans they would share the same fate. This story he had told also to Dayaks in the neighbourhood of Kuching. A subtle plan was formed to march overland on the town, and in the dead of night quietly to fire some houses and then fall on the English, who would be certain to turn out to help to extinguish the fires, and so would fall easy victims.

The old Datu Temanggong was the first to warn the Tuan Muda. He went to him, and, after taking the precaution of ordering all his followers out of the room, told him to take care of himself, and not to ride and walk about unarmed. He further observed that many suspicious reports were flying about. The chiefs were at once assembled, and were unanimous in recommending that the English officers should wear arms. "Why do we wear arms?" they said, "because we cannot trust our neighbours." The Datu Imaum added that he, being a haji, was not supposed to wear a sword, and opening his robe showed a hidden kris, sharp as a razor. The Tuan Muda was aware that it was useless asking them at this stage to give their authority for these suspicions; he knew they were not yet prepared

openly to go further than to warn him to be on his guard—what had come to their ears would be told him privately, and in due course of time. Natives are extremely reticent and cautious at such times. The datus did not wish to warn foes as well as friends, and were on their guard against unsuspected spies and babbling tongues. The warning was rightly regarded, and the Tuan Muda and his officers prepared to meet the dangers that were brewing.

A few days later the Datu Haji's plot was revealed to the Tuan Muda, and he acted with promptitude. "I assembled the chiefs, and acquainted them that I should turn him out of the country immediately he returned, and should prepare at once in case any opposition was shown." The chiefs seemed satisfied, and said they were powerless with such an old and morose man, and recommended me to use my own judgment in dealing with him, engaging to assist me. Guns were loaded, and gunboats fenced in, but everything was done quietly and without bustle. A guard was placed in Government House, and the apertures were barred to prevent sudden rushes. The day after the culprit returned and was informed that he had to leave the country. Friendly people were mustered from neighbouring rivers, and were lounging about in groups, ready at a moment's notice. All wore arms and work was suspended. Next morning came, and the Sarawak chiefs assembled the Nakodas (merchants) and population in the Native Court.[1] The Bandar addressed them in these curt words: "I follow the Sarawak Government; there is business to be done. All those who are disposed to follow and assist me, hold up their hands." They all responded favourably, and he then made known, "The Government banishes Datu Haji and Nakoda Dulah,[2] as they are considered too dangerous to live amongst us." Some of his relatives conveyed the news to him, and told the Haji he had to leave the next day; an

[1] A Court set apart for the settlement of Probate and Divorce cases and other civil suits arising amongst Muhammadans, and which are settled in accordance with Muhammadan law. Presided over by the Datus.

[2] A relation of the Datu Haji. He had been very active inciting the people of Lundu to revolt.

allowance would be granted to him by the Government. Resistance was useless on his part. So terminated this affair. He had been condemned in open court and by his own connections, the Bandar and the Imaum. Although he had no, or very little, influence in Kuching, he had in the country, for he was hand-in-glove with the malcontents amongst the Saribas and Sadong Malays, and was the cause of the revolt in the Sadong, due to his connection the Bandar Kasim. He was at once sent to Singapore, not, however, to remain there for long; and he shortly afterwards got himself into further and more serious trouble. He had failed, but he knew others would shortly be active, and he trusted to them to retrieve his failure, and so prepared to join them directly they moved. Bayang, the principal chief of the Dayaks, who had joined him, was imprisoned.

The discovery of this conspiracy, the murders of Steele and Fox, and the knowledge that other plots were certainly brewing naturally created great alarm amongst the English residents. No one felt safe, for none knew the actual extent of these plots, or could distinguish between friend and foe. The Government Officers were discouraged, for they felt that the confidence created by long years of labour, anxiety, and kindly intercourse between themselves and the natives was fast vanishing. Some of the piratical Dayaks, who were being slowly but surely weaned from their evil ways and induced to trade and plant, led astray by cunningly devised reports, retired again to their fastnesses in the interior and defied the Government; and it was feared that this disaffection might spread.[1] Sir Spenser St. John writes :—

The gentlemen, to a man, stuck to their posts with firmness,[2] the second class lost all courage; while the Bishop and some of the missionaries left, the former taking home news that it was a Mahommedan plot, with the Datu Imaum (the rival Mahommedan Bishop) at the head of it—whereas the Datu Imaum showed himself, as ever, the true and faithful friend of the English[3]—

[1] It must be borne in mind that Rentap was still at Sadok defying the Government.

[2] Messrs. Watson and Cruickshank at Saribas, and Mr. Grant at Belidah. In Kuching Messrs. Crookshank, R. Hay (who had joined in May 1857), and Alderson, a son of Baron Alderson, who served for a short time only.

[3] *Life of Sir James Brooke.*

and, we may add, true and faithful he remained for nearly fifty years afterwards.[1]

The year of anxiety and careful watching closed without any further outbreaks, but early in 1860 came the final episode, which ended in the complete dispersion of conspiracies and conspirators.

This was a mad and badly-concerted effort to carry through the disorganised plot. It was a plot not only to overthrow the Sarawak Government and murder all the English, but to massacre the Dutch in Western Borneo as well. By industriously spreading false reports, Sherip Masahor prepared the way for a rising of the natives against their English and Dutch rulers, knowing that if successful at one point it would become general. He was well aware how easy it would be to impose upon the ignorant and sheepish people along the coast, and his bold project was to despatch thither a specious and clever Bruni rogue, a runaway of rank from Bruni, named Tunjang, who was to personate the Pangiran Temanggong, the Prime Minister of Bruni, and no less a personage than the late Sultan's son, and the heir to the throne, who had now come from Bruni to exterminate all Europeans. He was to join the Bandar Kasim at Sadong, and advance up that river, raising the people to revolt during his progress, and to follow him. He was to cross over into Netherlands Borneo, where he would find many disaffected against their rulers ready to rally around him, and then proceed down the Kapuas and attack Pontianak, whither the Datu Haji was to proceed from Singapore to organise a second branch of the conspiracy, and to be ready to assist him from within when he appeared off that place. They were then to return and attack Kuching from the interior, whilst the Sherip made a simultaneous attack from the sea.

The relation of events which followed we take from the Tuan Muda's narrative[2] and from official records.

Early in January, Pangiran Matusin brought the Tuan Muda a letter sent him by the impostor, Tunjang, purport-

[1] He was better known in later days as the Datu Bandar.
[2] *Ten Years in Sarawak.*

ing to be from the Pangiran Temanggong, ordering him to proceed to Sadong and there to join this prince, who was waiting for a numerous force, which was to number many thousands. The Pangiran, the bearers of the letter had told him, was exacting and authoritative, and his orders were being readily obeyed by the people. Matusin supposed that the Temanggong had really come. The letter was a clever forgery executed by the Sherip together with others, which were subsequently sent to the datus and chiefs calling upon them to assist in exterminating all Europeans. The Tuan Muda saw in this a dangerous plot, and the hand of an impostor, and this was the view taken by the members of council. At once strong parties were despatched to cut off the evil-doer, whoever he was, and who, false as he might be, was capable of doing incalculable harm amongst the simple-minded people up-country, and had therefore to be dealt with promptly.

Rightly conjecturing that he might be making for the Kapuas, the Tuan Muda despatched one party under Mr. Hay to the head of the Sadong by the Sarawak river to prevent this, and an express was sent by Sherip Matusain to warn the Dutch officials. Though Mr. Hay pressed on, he was too late to intercept this pseudo prince, who had crossed the border, two days before he arrived, at the head of a strong following of Malays and Dayaks. In regal style this *prince* was borne in a litter, as became one of his exalted rank, and he now styled himself Sultan. Everywhere he was treated with marked respect. Men gladly enrolled themselves in his service, and accorded him the large contributions in goods and slaves that he exacted. It was arranged that the chiefs over the border—of Landak, Sanggau, and Pontianak—were to rise along with their people under his command against the Dutch ; and, indeed, it is probable that many might have done so, for at Sanggau he was received with salutes and all honours. But the rôle of a prince was to be speedily changed for the more fitting one of a malefactor in chains. The Dutch acted promptly, and one fine morning he found the place invested by troops, and the house in which he was staying surrounded. Some of his supporters appear to have flown

to his aid, for one pangiran was killed and another wounded —these were genuine pangirans. The impostor surrendered, was placed in irons, and conveyed to prison in Batavia ; here he was soon joined by the Datu Haji in the same unhappy plight. The latter had gone to Pontianak to carry out the part assigned to him, and had unwittingly run into a trap, for on landing he was immediately arrested. His departure from Singapore was known to Mr. Grant, who was then at that place, and reported by him to the Dutch Consul there, who immediately telegraphed the news to Batavia.

The countries Tunjang had passed through were in a most unsettled state, and the minds of the people were overfilled with false reports. Some of the head men were prepared to live, and, if needs be, die in support of the mock Temanggong. Sadong was in revolt, and the Bandar Kasim had sent an open defiance to Kuching. It was now known that Sherip Masahor was, and had been from the first, the leading spirit of the conspiracy, and Tunjang had confessed as much to the Dutch.[1]

Little suspecting the fate that had overtaken his fellow-conspirator and trusty agent, and deeming that the time had come for him to perform his part—the third branch of the conspiracy—Masahor moved on Kuching with a well-selected mob of his particular desperadoes. But the Tuan Muda was warned of his approach. The chiefs "earnestly breathed their anxieties about this individual, saying, 'Do what you think best for the safety of the country, we are ready to follow you.' All our guns were loaded and we never moved without being armed, which gave our friends great confidence, and the doubtful ones considerable fear." The Sherip was warned that he would be looked upon as an enemy and fired upon if he entered Sarawak territory, but this warning, if received in time, was unheeded. The Tuan Muda now started with a sufficient force to bring the Sadong people to their senses, but he had not proceeded far down the river before he encountered the Sherip advancing towards Kuching with two large prahus crowded with men. The

[1] The Sultan of Bruni affirmed to Consul-General St. John that the Sherip was responsible for the murder of Steele and Fox.

Sherip was brought up and ordered to turn his boats and follow the Tuan Muda's flotilla, and this order he dared not disobey. The Tuan Muda had no time to deal with him then, unless it had been done summarily, which would have entailed unnecessary loss of life, so Masahor was escorted out of the river, and bidden return to his own country: he was warned not to follow into the Sadong.

The Government station in the Sadong is at Semunjan, about twenty miles up the river. The Malays of this place were well-disposed. On the Tuan Muda's arrival early next night he was immediately warned that the Sherip's sole intention in going to Kuching was to put all the white men to death, and that he intended to strike at him first,[1] and a little later came news that the Sherip was anchored in the river just below. With enemies before him this rendered the situation critical, for the force with him was not large. He resolved to deal with the Sherip at once; "he is the enemy to strike, the rest are mere trifles," was the opinion of the chiefs with him.

No time was lost. The *Jolly Bachelor* and the prahus at once silently dropped down the river, and took up positions around the Sherip's large prahus; fearing the culprit might escape during the night, the sampans, or canoes, attached to his prahus were at once taken away.

The Tuan Muda had only Muhammadan Malays with him; to them the person of a Sherip, a descendant of the Prophet, was sacred, and to have him seized and put in irons was simply impossible. At dawn he called upon those who did not court destruction to leave the Sherip's prahus, which several did, and then he opened fire with round shot; so as to spare life, grapeshot was not used. The Sherip's vessel was struck about the water-mark, and soon began to fill, when a breeze springing up, he cut his cables and drifted ashore, escaping into the jungle with a few followers. The Tuan Muda's men were reluctant to follow him; some thought the Sherip invulnerable, others that he had the power of damping powder and blunting weapons from a

[1] A pension of 300 reals per mensem had been offered to any one taking the Tuan Muda's head; the danger attached to such an undertaking was evidently duly appreciated.

distance, and the search for him was but half-hearted. Three times the Tuan Muda had raised his rifle and covered the Sherip as he climbed the bank, but spared him. It is a pity he was merciful, for wandering down the banks of the river the Sherip and his followers came across a boat from which two Malays had landed. The boat they seized, and in it escaped to Muka—the Malays they wantonly murdered to cover their tracks. Among other articles found in his prahu was the Sherip's long execution kris; his bringing this was significant.

Then the Tuan Muda returned up the river. At Semunjan he learnt that the Bandar Kasim had incited the Malays there to rush the fort whilst he, the Tuan Muda, was engaged with the Sherip, but they had declined to have anything to do with him. On arriving at Gadong, then the principal Malay settlement, the Tuan Muda found that the Bandar Kasim and his rebellious clique had decamped over the border. He assembled the now thoroughly cowed people, and told them they had all been imposed upon by a man, passing himself off as a Bruni Rajah, and that he did not blame the lower class people. As Bandar Kasim had disavowed and challenged the Government the whole of his property was confiscated, and all his slaves were liberated. The people were assured by the Tuan Muda that he had no intention of taking steps to punish their misconduct, though he plainly told them they should have known better, and he begged them to be more careful in future. They loudly upbraided their chiefs for having misled them, and one man angrily turning to the people, exclaimed, "You are all a parcel of babies, only fit to crawl, instead of standing upright." He spoke the truth, but these poor ignorant creatures had not yet learnt to stand upright. The words of their chiefs were still law to them, and years of oppression had taught them to submit without murmur to the rule of the great over their lives and property. But the spell was broken. Their chiefs had fled before the Tuan Muda, and the greatest Sherip in the land had been utterly routed. The agent of the Bruni Government, whose presence on the coast has been mentioned, on hearing that the Sherip had been fired upon, left

his large prahu and fled in fear to Bruni in a small boat, declaring that he believed the heavens would collapse next. Shortly afterwards the Bandar Kasim arrived at Kuching with his whole family, and delivered himself up to the mercy of the Government.

The Tuan Muda then proceeded to Sekrang, and there received a letter from the Malay chief of Serikei, Abang Ali, urging him to come to their assistance, as Sherip Masahor had returned, and was again oppressing the people. At once the Tuan Muda collected a flying force of 150 large bangkongs, manned by his faithful Dayaks. Serikei was found to be deserted, and the Sherip had fled to Igan. His fine house was burnt down. After ascertaining that Kanowit was safe in the keeping of the people there, the Tuan Muda proceeded to Igan, the Sherip's actual stronghold, which was reported to be strongly fortified. This place with the district around was his own particular property, and was the centre of his followers, but he had no heart to face the Tuan Muda again, and fled to Muka. Igan was looted and burnt. Much of the Sherip's property was seized, including many long brass guns, or native cannon, of handsome design, which had been heirlooms in his family for generations, and some of these now adorn the Court House in Kuching.

The expulsion of Sherip Masahor completed the discomfiture of the conspirators and their adherents, and brought their conspiracies to an end. Though lacking unison and proper disposition these had menaced extreme danger. But the crisis past left the Government more firmly established than ever. The Sherips, the Bruni nobles, and the disaffected Sarawak chiefs now realised that their power to do harm and to mislead the people was for ever broken. Dispelled was all existing doubt as to the power of the Government to endure without extraneous assistance; and dispelled from the minds of the people was the myth of the might of the Sultan and his nobles. Confidence was established in many who were at heart in sympathy with a Government which brought them justice and security, but who, doubting its stability as a bulwark against the oppression

of their chiefs, had been prepared again to resign themselves to their power.

The repression by the Tuan Muda of this last effort of the supporters of extortion and misrule inaugurated an epoch of peace and freedom for all time. He had acted with vigour, and without delay. His resourcefulness and influence over the people enabled him to tide over a most difficult time with but poor material, and under the most trying circumstances. "I will not praise you, for words fall flat and cold, but you have saved Sarawak, and all owe you a deep debt of gratitude," were the words in which his uncle and chief conveyed his deserved appreciation of the services that had been rendered by him; and he won for himself the entire trust of the people of all classes, a trust that remains unimpaired to this day.

Indifference to the fate of Sarawak had been openly expressed by the British Government; consequently no helping hand had been proffered, though the troubles with which the State was beset were well known. Even the presence of a man-of-war, though she lent no active support, would have exercised great moral effect. "Sarawak has been encouraged and betrayed,"[1] in mournful anger wrote the Rajah, "England has betrayed us beyond *all doubt*, and in the time of urgent peril cares nothing whether we perish or survive."

In April, Captain Brooke, the Tuan Besar, returned to Sarawak and resumed his duties as head of the Government. His brother's arrival released the Tuan Muda from his duties at the capital, and left him free to devote his time to the more active work yet to be done in the provinces, where his presence was needed to reassure the people; and there were still the refractory Dayaks of the Serikei and Nyalong to be subjected, and Rentap to be smoked out of his lair.

[1] "Sarawak became virtually a protected State. Her ruler was appointed a public officer of the Crown, and such unequivocal countenance and support were given as to assure the natives, and to induce British subjects to embark their lives and fortunes in the country."—The Rajah to the Secretary of State for the Colonies. Nevertheless protection and support were withheld.

The Governor of Singapore sent the H.E.I.C.'s steamer, *Hooghly*, in November 1859, to safeguard British interests, but there was no need of her services then, and she left almost immediately.

Tunjang's fate is not recorded. The Dutch offered to deliver him up for punishment, but it was left to them to deal with him, and no doubt they dealt severely. The Datu Haji died at Malacca, and Bandar Kasim in Kuching. The confiscation of his property was deemed sufficient punishment, but he was not permitted to return to Sadong. The last phase of Sherip Masahor is recorded in the next chapter.

We will now briefly follow the Rajah's movements in England, whither he had gone mainly for a rest, which was, however, denied him. To add to the mental worries caused by intense desire to safeguard the future of his adopted country, he was visited by a grave bodily affliction.

His reception by Court and by Ministers was more cordial than on his previous visit to England, and he was publicly entertained at Liverpool and Manchester, but shortly afterwards he was struck down by a stroke of paralysis. Though some months passed before he recovered his bodily strength, the vigour of his mind remained unimpaired.

In his efforts to obtain protection he was backed by many influential friends, and by public bodies. The Birmingham Chamber of Commerce memorialised the Government to restore the protection afforded to Sarawak up to 1851, and a large and influential deputation, representing the mercantile interests of Liverpool, Manchester, Glasgow, and, to some extent, London, with several members of Parliament, waited upon Lord Derby with the same object. Lord Derby's refusal was severely commented upon by the *Times*, and it occasioned a difference in the Cabinet. The subject would again have been entertained, had not the Government shortly afterwards gone out on their Reform Bill.[1]

The Rajah was left with but little hope. He felt that the Government of both parties desired to be rid of Sarawak, and that the country was indifferent; moreover he was fully assured that Sarawak could not stand alone. England failing, Holland was tried, but "Holland," he writes, "declares openly that there is an understanding the country shall fall

[1] From Miss Jacobs, *The Raja of Sarawak*.

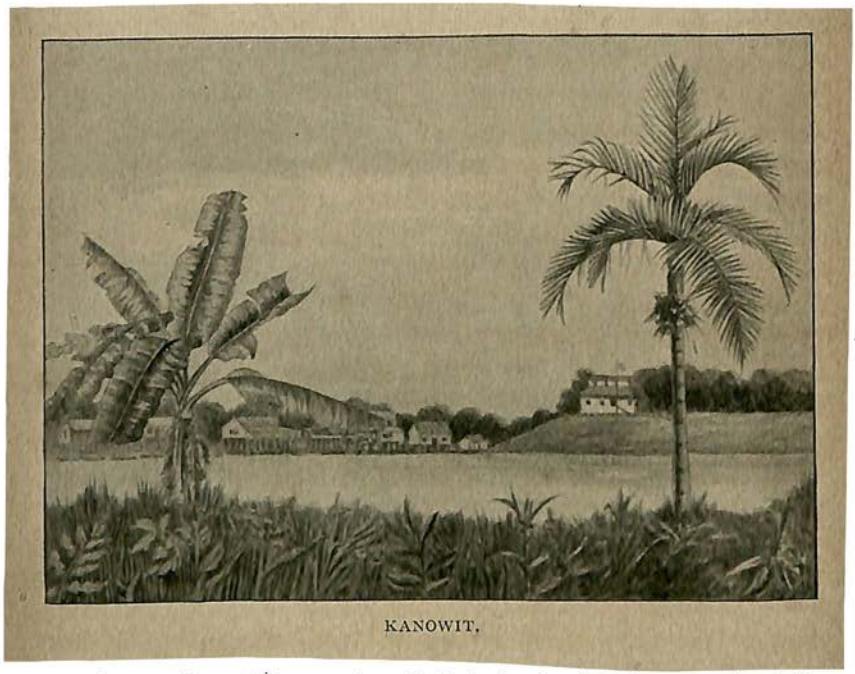
to them after my death." Then France was tried; and the protection of France, the Rajah was of opinion, could have been gained had the Tuan Besar been whole-hearted in the negotiations. But the Tuan Besar did not share the Rajah's opinion that Sarawak could not maintain its independence unsupported, and disliked the idea of handing the country over to a Foreign Power, and in this he was supported by the Tuan Muda. The Rajah wisely gave way to what has since proved to be the better judgment of his nephews, and he wrote to the Tuan Muda, "as my views for Sarawak are at an end, and as we are now to run the risk, with a rational prospect of success, to sustain the Government I will loyally and cheerfully work to falsify my own convictions. Time brings changes, and may work upon the British Government. But it was a fatal mistake to let slip an opportunity of safety, recognition, and permanency,[1] and to allow an English prejudice to interfere with Sarawak. However, it is past, and the juncture requires union, and united we will cheerily work," —and time was very shortly to work on the British Government in favour of Sarawak.

But pecuniary failure was also staring Sarawak in the face. The Borneo Company, Limited, suffering under severe losses consequent on the Chinese insurrection and the continued disturbed state of the country, were losing heart; they considered it advisable to withdraw from Sarawak, and such a step on their part would have been fatal to the investment of further British capital in the country. In the next place, the Rajah was being pressed for repayment of a large sum of money, which, for the purposes of the Government, he had found it necessary to borrow after the ruin caused by the Chinese insurrection. But "the Borneo Company persevered, and has long since reaped the benefit of so doing,"[2] and a kind and ever staunch friend, Miss (afterwards Baroness) Burdett-Coutts, relieved him of his pressing debt by a loan free of interest. She further advanced the money to purchase a steamer, a very urgent need, and the Rajah bought a little vessel which he named the *Rainbow*—"the emblem of hope,"

[1] Referring to the protection of France.

[2] Miss Jacobs, *op. cit.* For a special account of this Company see Chap. XVI.

and never was a rainbow after a storm more welcome. Of her the Tuan Muda wrote that "she was welcomed as a god-send of no ordinary description, whereby communication could be quickly carried on and outposts relieved or reinforced within a short time. She was the small piece of iron and machinery which could carry Sarawak's flag, and raise the name of the Government in the minds of the people along the coast."

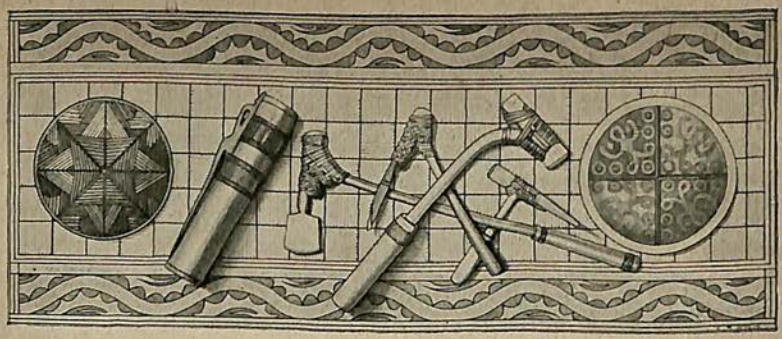


KANOWIT.

A testimonial to the Rajah had also been raised by public subscription "as a simple, earnest, and affectionate testimony of friends to a noble character and disinterested services—services which, instead of enriching, had left their author broken by illness and weariness of heart, with threatening poverty."[1] With a portion of this fund he purchased Burrator, a small estate in the parish of Sheepstor, on the fringe of Dartmoor, in Devon. It was then very much out of the world, having no station nearer than Plymouth, some miles off, and the intervening roads were steep, narrow, and bad. The situation is singularly picturesque; a moorland village,

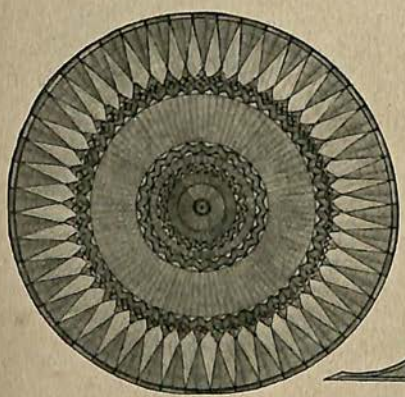
[1] Sir Thomas Fairbairn, Bart.

with a church of granite under the bold tor that gives its name to the place. Its wildness and seclusion charmed him, and there he settled in June, 1859, "trusting to live in retirement, in peace; but there is no peace for me with Sarawak in such a state," for the news of the Malay conspiracies caused him further distress of mind, and he resolved to return to Sarawak.



CHAPTER VIII

MUKA



IN 1856, the Honourable G. W. Edwardes had been appointed Governor of Labuan; Mr. Spenser St. John being Consul-General at Bruni. The Governor was known to have imbibed all the prejudices and antipathies fostered in England by Mr. Gladstone and his tail; and he was eager in everything to hamper the development of the little State of Sarawak. He was not, however, authorised to interfere in the relations between Bruni and Sarawak, nor in the internal affairs of these States, where he had no jurisdiction; but when the Consul-General left on leave early in 1860, the Consular Office was handed over to him, and he was then placed in a position to give vent to his bias, and, as Sir Spenser St. John remarks, "he was delighted to get a chance of giving a blow to Sarawak." With regard to Sherip Masahor, "he acted against his better judgment," and with regard to the

subsequent events at Muka "against the strong advice of his own experienced officers."[1]

Sherip Masahor, after having been driven out of Sarawak, retired to Muka, and, having established his family and numerous followers there, passed on to Bruni to lay his case before the Sultan. Consul-General St. John was then on the point of leaving, but before his departure he received information from the Sultan which left little doubt "that Masahor had instigated the murder of—had, in fact, by his paid agents, murdered—Messrs. Fox and Steele."[2] On his way to England Mr. St. John visited Kuching, and there obtained evidence which quite convinced him of the Sherip's guilt, and he then wrote to the Sultan, calling upon him to deliver up the Sherip to the Sarawak Government. But this letter passing into acting Consul-General Edwardes' hands was suppressed by him. He had seen the plausible Sherip, who had been sent to him by the Sultan, and not only declined to believe in his guilt, but advised the Sultan that his detention was not justifiable, and that he should be permitted to return to Muka; there to watch and if needs be oppose the aggression of the Rajah's nephews. To add fuel to the flame, he led the Sultan to believe that prosperous Sarawak would soon be restored to Bruni—a tempting prospect for the covetous and plundering nobles.

Writing to the Tuan Besar, under date July 4, 1860, Governor Edwardes says:—

> After careful consideration of the documents sent, and examination of the case, I am unable to arrive at the conviction that Sherip Masahor is guilty of instigating the murders of Messrs. Fox and Steele, or of such complicity to justify me to induce his Highness to surrender him.
>
> His Highness, and the Rajahs, have expressed the most earnest desire to further the ends of justice, and to afford every assistance to the Sarawak Government. I have full confidence in their sincerity.
>
> I have not hesitated to inform his Highness and the Rajahs that I consider the evidence insufficient and that he (Sherip Masahor) could not with justice be surrendered.

As regards the Tuan Muda's actions in attacking and

[1] *Life of Sir James Brooke.* [2] *Idem.*

driving Sherip Masahor out of Sarawak, Mr. Edwardes wrote that these "have greatly prejudiced the British name and character in this country, and have engendered a strong feeling of hostility to this colony (Labuan)."

In obedience to instructions the poor Sherip had gone to Kuching from Serikei, taking certain Government monies and properties. In the Sarawak river he had met the Tuan Muda coming down, and he then received orders to follow him and join in an attack on Sadong. He obeyed, and on entering the Sadong river brought up and anchored, the Tuan Muda going on. The same evening the Tuan Muda dropped down, anchored close to his prahu, sent and *borrowed* his small boat, and the next morning unexpectedly fired upon him. This is the story the Sherip told the Governor at Bruni, and this is the story the Governor found it suitable to his purpose to believe, though he *hoped* it was not true, and that he would be able "to clear away so great a stain upon the British name."[1]

The energetic Sherip, before he left Muka had stirred up his brother-in-law, the sleepy Pangiran Nipa, in charge there, to reconstruct and strengthen the defences of the place, and there he was joined by his Igan and Segalang people. No Sarawak traders were allowed to enter the port to obtain raw sago, and the Muka people were forbidden to have any commercial dealings with Kuching. A vessel chartered by a Madras trader, a British subject, was prohibited under the heaviest penalties from entering the Sarawak river, and two of his companions, also British subjects, were detained as hostages against his doing so. A fleet of twenty-five Sarawak vessels had been forced to collect at Bruit, permission having been refused to enter Muka to load sago; and the sago factories in Kuching were rendered idle.

From Bruni two agents had arrived at Muka, the Bandari Samsu and Makoda Muhammad, whose sole business was to spread false reports for the purpose of stirring up feelings of hostility against the English in Sarawak. A spear (the usual token of a call to arms) had been sent through the Sea-Dayak countries under Sarawak rule by the Sherip to order

[1] Extracted from Governor Edwardes' letter to the Tuan Besar of May 25, 1860.

the Dayaks in the names of the Bruni Rajahs to repair to Muka, and that would have led to the coast, from Rejang to Bintulu, under the Sultan's rule, being ravaged by thousands of Dayaks, and the heads taken of every man, woman, and child met by them; fortunately, however, the Sarawak officials were able to keep the Dayaks in.

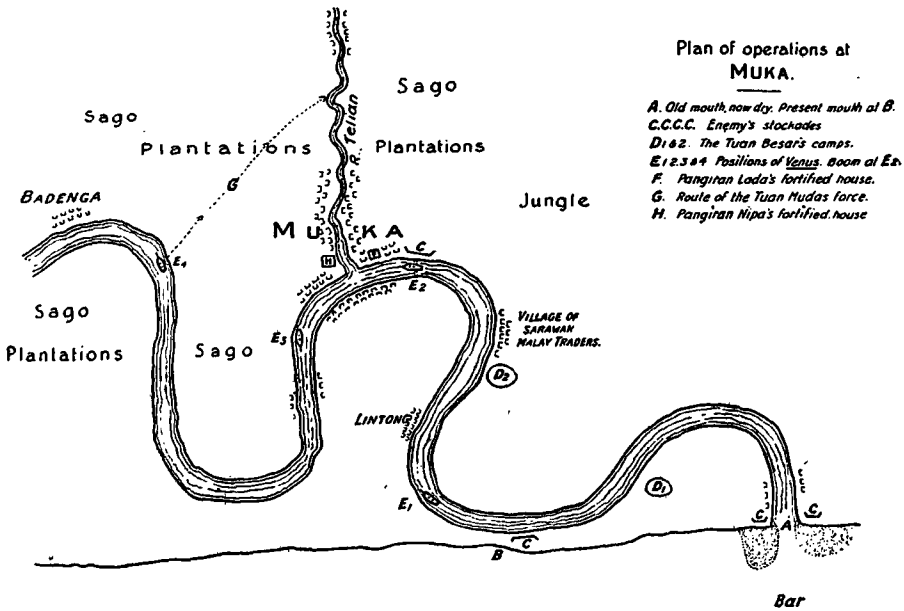
The Tuan Muda had received a letter from the Pangiran Temanggong couched in the most friendly terms, repudiating the acts of Nipa, and informing him that the Muka river was to be opened for trade to all alike; but in the meantime the Bruni Court, always playing a double game, had despatched the two agents above mentioned, with an order that the Sarawak nakodas were not to be allowed to fly the Sarawak flag at Muka, nor to trade directly with the Muka people, but only through the Bruni Pangirans.

Acting upon the Temanggong's assurance, the Sarawak vessels had gone to Muka, but off the mouth the nakodas had been warned that they would be fired on if they entered, and the bearer of a friendly letter from the Tuan Besar to the Pangiran Nipa was refused admittance. With the aid of the Temanggong's letter, the Tuan Besar determined to try by friendly negotiations to get Pangiran Nipa to be reasonable, and failing that to send the Tuan Muda on to Bruni to complain to the Sultan.

In June, 1860, they anchored off the bar, and a Sambas Malay, the nakoda of a vessel flying Dutch colours, was commissioned to take in a letter saying that the Tuan Besar had come as a friend, and as bearer of a letter from the Pangiran Temanggong of Bruni, to the effect that Muka was not to be closed to Sarawak traders. No reply was vouchsafed, and with telescopes it was observed from the gunboats that earthworks were being thrown up at the mouth of the river. The Tuan Besar then decided to take up the message himself, and two small boats were sent in to sound the bar, upon which a large war prahu came out and fired at them. This was a declaration of war, and the Tuan Besar resolved to let them have what they invoked.

The following is an account of the affair as given by the Tuan Muda in his book, *Ten Years in Sarawak*, 1866:

We plainly perceived that the enemy was preparing in earnest for opposition. Temporary stockades were being erected at the entrance and many hundreds of people were collecting heaps of wood in various places on the shore; these were to be burnt, and their intention was to raise a strong breeze to drive us from our anchors and drift us on to the coast. The idea of the effect was correct, that excess of heat would produce a vacuum, and cause an inshore current of air. However, their fires were not sufficient, and the expected effect did not follow.



The town of Muka lies about two miles up the river of the same name, and is situated on both banks of that river and of another, the Telian, smaller in volume, that here flows into it. At the mouth was not only the usual bar, the channel through which had been staked to obstruct the entrance, but also a long sandy finger of land on the north side, which at that time deflected the tortuous stream. Behind the gunboats was a fleet of traders impatient to enter and obtain their cargoes; for which they were more eager than for exposure to danger.

We had received an announcement of a large party among the enemy being in favour of at once making peaceful overtures; and even the headman's brother, Pangiran Lada, advised the opening of their river, and admission of our boats to trade; but the headman himself, Pangiran Nipa, was firm in the grasp of Sherip Masahor's mother and sister, who were hostile to any approach to friendly relations. Many of our people had relatives among the enemy, some even had wives living in Muka. A council of war was held on board the *Venus*[1] in the evening, at which all the chiefs and Europeans were present. It was decided that an advance should be made next morning for the entrance to the Muka river. A landing party was appointed to cut off the narrow point which extends to the mouth. By landing there and making a demonstration, the enemy would give up their lower stockade, and the pinnaces might then have free ingress over the bar and through the narrow channel.

The Tuan Besar took charge of the landing party, which, however, could not effect much, as it was so small, and a despatch was sent off to Kuching to hurry up reinforcements. The Tuan Muda was in command of the little fleet of three small gunboats.

Morning came, and we were on the alert before the sun had given any signs of approaching the horizon, and within a few minutes we were gliding along (the Tuan Muda aboard the *Venus*), with a light though full breeze steering to the nearest point for crossing the bar; then we again came to anchor. Our first work was to draw the spikes, which were soon shaken with bowline knots let down to their base. We opened a passage wide enough for an entry, and with one boat in tow we advanced towards the mouth. The sea was as calm as a pond, and the morning bright without a cloud. We had crossed over the bar with only six inches under our keel, and a stake had dragged along under our bottom without doing injury even to the copper.

One boat, commanded by a gallant native, Penglima Seman (who has so often been mentioned before), was ahead of us, and drawing towards the enemy's stockades, at which we opened fire directly we were within range. The enemy soon abandoned this position and made off up the river as fast as boats would carry them. We then entered the river, and anchored about half-way between the mouth and the enemy's fortifications to await further orders, and become better acquainted with the position of what forts and obstacles they might have thrown in our way, to allow time also for the remainder

[1] A sailing gunboat of 50 tons, just launched, and manned with a crew of twelve Englishmen and twenty Malays.

of our flotilla to join us. We inspected the enemy's fortifications in the afternoon, and found that they were holding a high and formidable-looking stockaded house of two stories, the lower having port-holes for large guns, and the upper pierced with small apertures for the firing of lelahs (brass ordnance of native manufacture). There were also small stockades, protected with sacks full of raw sago.

The position was well chosen, and had thorough command of a long reach in the river. A few yards below the fort were two large booms fastened across the river, with no apparent passage for boats to pass through.

A landing party was despatched in the morning to reconnoitre the enemy's position, and a temporary enclosure was then thrown up by our party beyond the range of the enemy's guns, to form a basis for active operations, from which nearer stockades could be fed and watched,—

that is to say, advanced stockades could be thrown up and kept supplied with men and ammunition.

The Tuan Besar was at the head of two hundred men, but on a good many of these no reliance could be placed. After having established a basis of operations on the spit of land at the mouth, he was to advance in the direction of the town. This was done, and as the force approached it was saluted with fire from the guns in the stockades and houses, but that did little damage, and the party set to work intrenching itself. "Nearly the first shot fired entered a prog-basket and smashed a bottle of gin. A few only were wounded, and the escape from further casualties was surprising."

The Tuan Muda was now resolved on running the gauntlet past the town, up the river, so as to place it between himself and the land force under the Tuan Besar, whose position was in danger. It would be a hazardous as well as a daring attempt, but he prepared for it in an ingenious manner, by constructing a stockade round the *Venus*. Long beams were placed across the schooner, and to them a framework was attached horizontally, and upon this frame a stockade was erected, screening the deck and the sides to the water's edge, so that the *Venus* assumed the appearance of a monstrous "Jack in the Green" or haystack. The thick planks reached to five feet above the bulwarks, and were pierced with holes through which the

guns could play on the enemy's fortified houses as the *Venus* drifted up-stream with the tide. This took two days to accomplish. Meanwhile on shore the land party had thrown up a bank for protection, and further the natives had dug pits about two feet deep in which they lay after duty, and were thus completely protected from the enemy's shot.

But no progress up the river could be effected till the booms had been removed, and this would not be an easy matter, as they were commanded by the forts. It could be effected only at night, and by expert and daring swimmers. The Tuan Muda, Pangiran Matusin, and a nakodah, undertook the task. Under cover of the darkness, in a small canoe, they stole softly up the bank, unobserved, and then the pangiran and nakoda entering the water, with their swords set to work to sever the rattans that held the booms in place. These rattans had been twisted together to the thickness of a hawser cable, and had to be cut under water. It was an anxious time for the Tuan Muda, as any moment might have brought a volley on their heads.

In an hour they were severed. Towards the latter part of the time, the enemy were on the alert, and one boom moved slightly with the tide, when a few harmless shots ensued, which we heard pass over our heads among the leaves. At length the two men returned, and the enemy cried out, "Our booms are adrift," and forthwith banged away, but never caught sight of us. Matusin was so exhausted that I had to assist him into the boat, and at first I thought he was wounded.

The tide was ebbing, and the booms, now disengaged, floated downwards towards the sea. The passage was clear for the venture upwards of the *Venus*. Messrs. Watson and John Channon accompanied the Tuan Muda, who had a crew of nine Europeans, besides the Malay complement.

On that night the attempt was to be made, anchor to be raised half an hour before midnight, when the tide was flowing. Happily the weather favoured, as a thick mist and drizzling rain set in.

We triced up the awnings and up anchor, when the tide swept us on so swiftly that I soon found it would be hopeless trying to turn the vessel, so we drifted stern first, with two oars out on each side to assist in steering. Our guns were loaded and ready,

and not a voice was to be heard as we silently and swiftly drifted along. I stood on the top of the stockade to pilot the vessel. We were soon off the camp (of the land force under the Tuan Besar), from which I was hailed to look out as the enemy would fire on us directly. I replied "All right," and then stepped on deck to be under cover. Just as I was so doing, a shot was fired from the bank close abreast of us. Another five minutes, and we were fairly in the fray. I heard the enemy call "Look out, the pinnace is drifting up," and they blazed on us volley after volley, as we lay within five or six yards of their fortifications. Watson watched to fire as the enemy opened their ports, but the haze was far too dense for us to discern anything at all; I soon found, however, that we were not progressing, and had fouled something. We swung to and fro, at times close under the enemy's guns, and then away into the centre of the stream.

We let go our anchor and hauled it up again, but all to no purpose, and we were at a loss to know what had fouled us. We then laid out a kedge and hove it home, without moving clear, and every now and then we blazed our 6-pounder of grape into the enemy, while they peppered us incessantly. The position was far from pleasant with guns banging all around and the fog and smoke so dense as to preclude a possibility of making out our position. At length I found that a large rattan made fast to one of the booms which had been cut adrift was holding us. The rattan was across the river, and the enemy had evidently entertained the intention of reconstructing their booms that night. I ordered a plucky young native[1] to jump down and cut it, which he did with two strokes of his sword. This had been holding us now for more than two hours under the enemy's fire.

Directly the rattan was gone, the schooner swung sufficiently to bring the guns to bear on a lofty building whence most of the firing had come, and, after a round of grape, the wailing of women was heard issuing from it, and the enemy's fire was silenced. Next morning it was ascertained that the Pangiran Lada, brother of Pangiran Nipa, and some of his followers had been killed. The tide was still flowing, and the *Venus* drifted on above the town, and anchor was cast within range of all the houses. Only one small stockaded place continued to fire on her.

Four hours had elapsed since we started; for three we had been exposed to fire. When we had passed the danger, our men gave

[1] Dagang, a brave Balau Dayak, who subsequently filled many positions of trust, as Police Sergeant and native officer, now retired on pension.

three hearty cheers, which was answered by the party in the camp. At daylight we found a goodly mess on our decks, shot, pieces of iron, and nails in bucketfuls; our spars and ropes had been considerably damaged and cut about. The awnings were riddled with grape and nails; scarce a square foot had escaped uncut, but only two men were wounded, one, an Englishman, in the face. The other was struck in the leg by a splinter; but the barricading of wood had most effectually saved us all; without it, I don't think one would have lived to tell the story.

After an hour's work, the deck had been cleared, and then we opened fire upon the enemy's village, or rather on the headman's house (Pangiran Nipa's), which had guns mounted on the roof. The women and children had all been taken up a small stream on which the village is situate.[1] The only return was kept up by the small stockade which had troubled us on the previous night, and this place must have been guarded by some very determined fellows.

The whole country—if only we had an available force with us—was in our hands. To all appearance the place was deserted, and it provoked us beyond measure not to be able to take the initiative. In the course of the afternoon we determined to pull higher up the river, and take up a position to communicate with our force at the mouth. We should also be above the enemy's fortifications, and enabled to receive and support those who were inclined to favour our cause.

Here the Tuan Muda was constrained to remain for over a month, as was also the Tuan Besar below the town, waiting for reinforcements from Kuching.

Desultory fighting, firing at the forts and from them, and attempts made to waylay those who passed between the camp and the *Venus* occupied the tedious interval, but at length the desired help came; and those who arrived were divided between the force under the Tuan Besar, which would be engaged in a frontal attack on the town, whilst the other force, under the Tuan Muda, would march inland to make a flanking movement.

Everything being ready, the Tuan Muda started, drawing with him a 6-pounder gun. The Englishmen of his party numbered nine. The advance was by no means easy. The ground was rough and treacherous, full of bog-holes, and the enemy hovered around, and kept blazing at the party from every cover.

[1] The Telian.

"Pangiran Matusin was indefatigable; no weight seemed too heavy for his powerful limbs to lift, and although a man of rank, he worked as one of his slaves. At midnight we fitted our 6-pounder brass gun, and fired one shot to see that it was ready. The enemy fired all night, and the quantity of ammunition expended must have been considerable."

On the morrow, at daybreak, all preparations were made for a further advance, when a messenger arrived from the Tuan Besar ordering the cessation of further hostilities, as Mr. Edwardes, Governor of Labuan, had arrived off the mouth of the Muka in the H.E.I.C.'s steamer *Victoria*, had peremptorily forbidden them, and had threatened, unless he were instantly obeyed, that he would fire a broadside upon the Sarawak camp. He further sent a messenger into Muka to inform the Pangiran Nipa that he and his were taken under British protection, and to forbid any more hostilities whilst the Sarawak forces were withdrawing.

The indignation and consternation produced by this interference can be better imagined than described. The Tuan Muda was of course obliged to withdraw and descend the river, jeered at by the enemy at every point, who, regardless of the orders of the Governor of Labuan, continued to fire at the party, which fire they did not venture to return.

We reached the headquarters shortly after mid-day, and I was present at a discussion before the Governor, an old and infirm man, who most doggedly attempted by every means in his power to bring disgrace on our little State. He expressed himself with marked favour towards the Sherip Masahor and his followers here, notwithstanding that they had been the murderers of two Englishmen only the year before. The Governor held interviews in the houses of the natives of Muka (our enemies), and reports were listened to, even credited, of the demands and deceits of the Sarawak government. None but the most blind and prejudiced could have entertained a doubt of the absurdity of these assertions, but the Governor's duty appeared to be a preconcerted business to disgrace our flag,[1] and to defeat our objects, which were, firstly, to open trade; secondly, expel Sherip Masahor and his myrmidons, and establish some creditable government that would enable traders to hold their property and lives in safety.

[1] Under the pretext of "having a proper regard for British interests, and the honour of my country."—Governor Edwardes to the Tuan Besar, July 31, 1860.

He found fault with the proceedings of Pangiran Matusin, and was startled when told the man in question was sitting opposite him. A few papers were immediately produced by the Pangiran to justify his acts. The signatures of the Rajahs of Bruni were attached to the documents, and the old Pangiran's quiet, gentle voice, under as resolute an eye and countenance as could be seen, softened the Governor's heart towards him.

If this untimely interference had not taken place, the country would have been in our hands in three days.

Under protest, and with an intimation that the matter would be referred to the Foreign Office, the Sarawak force retired, followed by boatloads of the more peaceful inhabitants, who entreated not to be left to Sherip Masahor's vengeance.

Governor Edwardes informed the Tuan Besar that he had received power from the *Sultan* to interfere, and then called upon him in the name of the *Queen* to retire from Muka; he was acting as a minister of Bruni as well as a British official.

The Tuan Besar was unwilling to risk a collision.

He need not have paid any attention to the Governor's summons, and it is probable that had he refused to listen to it, Mr. Edwardes would not have dared to interfere with violence. But Captain Brooke took the wise course of withdrawing his force and appealing for justice to the British Government. For this conciliatory and prudent step he received Lord Russell's thanks. I will not enlarge on Mr. Edwardes' conduct, but his constant association with the murderers of his countrymen was very much commented upon.[1]

Protesting against the action of the Governor "as seriously affecting British trade and compromising the safety of British subjects," the Singapore Chamber of Commerce wrote to Lord John Russell, October 5, that the Governor was actuated by jealousy of Sarawak, "the interests of that colony (Labuan) being in some degree opposed to that of the settlement of Sarawak, the latter having attracted to it a large trade, part of which might but for the existence of Sarawak be expected to find its way to Labuan."

Before the Tuan Besar left Muka, the Governor, both by word and in writing, pledged himself not to leave Muka until all the forts there had been demolished, and he guaranteed

[1] St. John, *op. cit.*

that trade should be opened, and that all those, both at Muka and Oya, who had sided with the Sarawak Government should not in any way be punished. But these were promises he had no intention to perform, neither had he any power to do so, for he returned to Labuan the day after the Tuan Besar had departed, and left Sherip Masahor under the ægis of the British flag to work his own sweet will on the people. By a significant coincidence the Sherip's arrival there had been simultaneous with his own.

Furthermore, Mr. Edwardes had brought down with him a Bruni minister, the Orang Kaya de Gadong, the head of the Council of Twelve, known as "a consistent opponent of any intercourse with Christian nations; and when forced by business to sit and converse with Europeans, the expression of his face is most offensive, and he was one of the few natives I have met who appeared to long to insult you. He was one of the most active of those engaged in the conspiracy to assassinate the Rajah Muda Hasim, partly on account of his supposed attachment to the English alliance."[1] This was the man who was to act as the Sultan's agent, and when the Governor had left he cruelly vindicated his authority in the usual Bruni fashion. He levied heavy fines which he wrung from these poor people, returning to Bruni with many thousand dollars' worth of property, and taking with him the names of thirty *rebels* to be submitted to the Sultan as deserving of death. But rebels against the Sultan they were not. They had heard three years before the Sultan's mandate enpowering the Rajah to guard and guide their affairs, ordering peace, and authorising the Rajah to punish any breach of it; they had heard the Rajah pledge himself to punish any who by their actions should disturb it. Now for forming a party in favour of peace and order, and for holding themselves aloof from the real disturbers of peace, they were handed over for punishment to the latter by a British official. These unfortunate people could not resist. Resistance was rendered impossible, as the Orang Kaya and the Sherip had come down backed by a man-of-war, which represented a power which they well

[1] St. John, *Life in the Forests of the Far East*.

knew was far stronger than the Sarawak Government, to which they would have otherwise looked for help.

This, however, was not the only evil caused by the wanton and capricious act of Governor Edwardes. The whole country was disturbed. The peaceably disposed were filled with apprehension, and all the restless and turbulent Sea-Dayaks encouraged by reports, which, though exaggerated, were but the natural consequence of the Governor's action, coupling his name and the Sherip's together as the real Rajahs of the country, prepared to protect the enemies of the Sarawak Government with men-of-war. The Sherip's henchman, Talip, the actual murderer of Steele, led a large force of Kayans down the Rejang river, attacked the Katibas, and destroyed fourteen Dayak villages. This was done because these Dayaks had been staunch to the Tuan Muda against the Sherip. The Malays at Kanowit were seized with a panic, and the Tuan Besar seriously entertained the idea of abandoning the station, which would have meant the sago districts being again exposed to the raids of the Dayaks. Sherip Masahor was left at Muka, with all the prestige of having the Governor on his side, to reorganise his plots, with tenfold more power to do mischief than before; and just as confidence had been again established after the late troubles, the lives of the Europeans were again endangered. The sago trade was ruined. The Sarawak vessels had to return empty; the factories in Kuching to suspend work; and the Singapore schooners to sail without cargoes.

Whilst the Tuan Besar returned to the capital to direct affairs there, the Tuan Muda remained on the coast to oppose any aggressive action the Sherip and his Bruni colleagues might conduct against those within the borders, as also to counteract their growing influence. The Melanaus of Rejang village, who were not safe where they were, to the number of 2000, he saw safely moved to Seboyau. Numbers of Muka, Oya, and Matu people also abandoned their homes, and shifted into Sarawak territory. The Kalaka Malays, although in Sarawak territory, were so near the borders that they did not deem themselves safe, and sent an urgent message to the Tuan Muda for protection whilst

they made their preparations for moving. He at once went to them, remained with them until they were ready, and then in the *Venus* escorted them to Lingga. All these wretched people had to abandon their sago estates and gardens, but they deemed anything preferable to constant danger to life and liberty, and to being ground down to supply the rapacity of the Bruni nobles.

Fearing that many of their people would be led astray by the agents of Sherip Masahor, who were now all over the country withdrawing people from their allegiance to the Government, the well-disposed Dayak chiefs of the Kanowit earnestly begged that an English officer should be stationed there. The Tuan Muda visited Kanowit without delay, and with the aid of the people built a new fort in a better position. Having obtained the sincerest promises from the Dayaks to protect and support him, the Tuan Muda left young Mr. Cruickshank in charge, and then returned to Sekrang. Active measures had also to be taken against a large party of Dayaks in the Saribas who had fortified themselves in preparation for the coming of the Sherip, and these were driven out. But the Saribas Malays were surprisingly staunch. "Enemies were numerous up the rivers Sekrang, Saribas, Kalaka, Serikei, and Kanowit, numbering many thousands of families, all of whom relied on the support of Sherip Masahor,"[1] and these had to be watched and kept in check by punitive forces despatched in different directions. The heads of these rivers have one water-shed, and the focus of the malcontented Dayaks was Rentap's reputed impregnable stronghold on Sadok. Owing to its situation, almost in the centre of this water-shed, it was at once a support and a refuge to those Dayaks, and around it they gathered. The powers of the Government during the past few years had been taxed to their utmost, so that Rentap of necessity had been left undisturbed, and with the munitions of war supplied by the Sherip, and the staunch support of the Kayans his power had increased. But the Tuan Muda was not to be denied, and his fall was near.

[1] *Ten Years in Sarawak.*

In November, 1860, the Rajah left England, and with him went the Consul-General, Mr. S. St. John, and Mr. Henry Stuart Johnson[1] to join his uncle's service. After a short detention in Singapore waiting for the *Rainbow*, he arrived at Kuching on Feburary 12, 1861.

The Consul-General now officially informed the Council of Sarawak that the British Government disavowed and totally disapproved of Governor Edwardes' proceedings. But though they reprimanded him, they supported him in office. His term as Governor was, however, very shortly to expire, but not till he had seen, what must have been gall and bitterness to his soul, as it certainly was to his backers in England, the cession by the Sultan to Sarawak of Muka and all the region of the sago plantations, the produce of which he had hoped to secure for Labuan, and the banishment of Sherip Masahor from Borneo.

Mr. St. John went on to Bruni and relieved Mr. Edwardes of his position as Consul-General, and was the tactful and just medium for arranging the difficulties produced by the conduct of the latter. He says:

> I established myself in the capital, to find the Sultan sulky at the failure of Mr. Edwardes' promises. I remained quiet for a few weeks, when I found his Highness gradually coming round, but it was long ere I was again established first adviser to the Crown, for Mr. Edwardes' promises had either been great, or had been misunderstood, and they thought that the British Government was about to remove the English from Sarawak, and return the country to them.[2]

In April the Rajah went to Bruni. The Sultan and the wazirs received him warmly, and the good understanding between the two countries was established anew. The Sultan was now anxious to place Muka and the intermediate places under the Rajah's rule, but the latter waived this consideration until hostilities were over. The Rajah then went to

[1] Youngest son of the Rev. Charles Johnson. He was at first styled *Tuan Adek*, but this was afterwards changed to the more correct Malay title of Tuan Bongsu, now held by the present Rajah's third son. (Adek = younger brother; bongsu = youngest born.) He served principally in the Saribas, until 1868, when his health having broken down he retired. He became Deputy-Governor of Parkhurst and Chatham Prisons in succession, and then Chief Constable of Edinburgh. He died March 31, 1894.

[2] St. John, *Life of Sir James Brooke*.

Oya, Mr. St. John accompanying him, also the Sultan's envoy, Haji Abdul Rahman, bearing private letters and messages from the Sultan pressing Pangiran Nipa not to fight. Here the principal chiefs were seen, and the Sultan's commands that hostilities should cease and that Sherip Masahor was to be banished were read to them.[1]

Mr. St. John then went to Singapore to obtain a man-of-war from which to deliver the Sultan's decree at Muka, and the Rajah made every preparation to assume the offensive against Muka, as it was not expected that the Sherip would quietly submit to even the Sultan's mandate. Masahor had defied both the Sultan and the Bruni Rajahs, and had heaped insults upon them so often before when in the plenitude of his power in the Rejang, where he had been practically an independent prince, with the dreaded and powerful Kayans and the Dayaks at his back, that his submission was doubtful. This was no idle supposition, as one writer has suggested, for when, two months after Mr. Edwardes' ill-advised action at Muka, the *Victoria*, conveying Messrs. A. C. Crookshank and L. V. Helms (of the Borneo Company), again visited Muka, to endeavour once more by peaceable means to re-open trade with Kuching, these gentlemen and the captain, who had foolishly gone up to the town unarmed and without a guard, met with a hostile reception on the part of the Sherip, and would have fared badly at his hands, had not his adherents been prevailed upon to desist by the wiser counsel of Pangiran Nipa.

Mr. St. John went to Muka in H.M.S. *Charybdis*, and with Captain Keane and an armed force of 200 blue-jackets and marines proceeded up to the town. The Sultan's *titah* (decree), "advising a cessation of hostilities, and that Sherip Masahor and his men were to leave the country," was read, and both Pangiran Nipa and the Sherip promised obedience. They were told that Mr. Edwardes' interference had not met with the approval of her Majesty's Government, and "Captain Keane's judicious conduct in taking an overpowering force up the river to the middle of the town showed them that Mr. Edwardes' support was no longer to be relied upon."[2]

[1] From a letter to the Tuan Muda of May 5.

[2] St. John, *op. cit.*

The Rajah then went to Muka with a large force to ensure that there should be no resistance, and Muka was surrendered to him. Pangiran Nipa and the Bruni aristocracy were sent to Bruni, and Sherip Masahor was deported to Singapore. The Rajah wrote: "He will never trouble Sarawak more, and I am not lover enough of bloody justice to begrudge him his life on that condition. He deserved death, but he was a murderer for political ends."

The Rajah now established himself at Muka, and spent a month working to bring order into the district, so torn by civil war and crushed by oppression that everything was in confusion, and where there had been no protection for either person or property, and justice had not been administered. The effect of opening the port was immediate. Numbers of vessels entered bringing goods from Kuching to traffic with the natives for raw sago.

Early in August the Rajah went to Bruni again, and for the last time. The concession to Sarawak of the coast and districts from the Rejang to Kedurong point was then completed. For many years the Sultan had derived little or no revenue from these parts, for what had been squeezed out of the natives by the pangirans went to fill their own pockets, and he was more than satisfied to receive a sum down and an annual subsidy, which would be paid into his own hands. And the natives rejoiced, for they were now freed from the rapacity of these Bruni pangirans.

"And thus," says the Tuan Muda, "were about 110 miles of coast annexed to the Sarawak territory—valuable for the sago forests, but in a most disturbed state, owing to a prolonged period of the worst anarchy and misgovernment. Its inhabitants had many redeeming qualities when once relieved from the Bruni tyranny and oppression, as they were industrious and clever in different trades, particularly that of working wood, and the rougher kinds of jungle labour. But they required a severe hand over them, although one that was just, and were scarcely able to appreciate kindness. They had considered it a merit to a certain extent to be the Sultan's slaves, although they had many times smarted under the foulest injustice, and been deprived of their

wives and daughters; the majority of the latter class were often taken for the Bruni Rajahs' harems.

"The women were considered better looking than most others on the coast, having agreeable countenances, with the dark open rolling eye of Italians. The men are cleanly and generally well dressed, but not so nice looking as those of many other tribes."

After the Rajah had laid the foundations of good government, he appointed Mr. Hay as Resident,[1] and in a few years the aspect of the place, the condition of the people, and even their character was changed for the better. A fort had also been planted at Bintulu, then at the extreme north of the coast now under the sway of the Rajah, and a Resident appointed there.

Sherip Masahor, exiled to the Straits Settlements, lived the rest of his life in Singapore. He was granted a small pension by the Sarawak Government, which he eked out by boat-building, and died in February, 1890. To the end he continued to intrigue, through his relatives, in Sarawak affairs, but to no purpose.

He was an arch-fiend, and the murderer of many of his countrymen. He butchered in cold blood the relatives and followers of Pangiran Matusin; he executed his own trusted agents in the murder of Fox and Steele to silence their tongues. One further instance of his cruelty may be quoted. Jani, a noted Sea-Dayak chief of Kanowit, visited Sherip Masahor at Muka, and told him that Abang Ali had sent him to murder him, Masahor, treacherously, which was absolutely false, and that he revealed the fact to convince the Sherip of his own loyalty to his person. Masahor bade him prove his loyalty by attacking the fort at Kanowit. Jani promised to do this, but asked to be given a head so that he might not return empty-handed to his people. The Sherip ordered up a young lad, the adopted son of a Malay of rank, a follower of the Sarawak Government, whom he had already mutilated by cutting off his hands, and he bade Jani then and there decapitate the poor boy and take his head. This is but one instance of his ruthlessness. Backed

[1] He retired in 1863.

by his Segalangs he had always been a terror to the Malays and Melanaus of the Rejang.

The Rajah's work was now done. What he had come out to do had been accomplished, and his failing health led him to seek peace and repose at his refuge, Burrator. "I am not strong, and need to be kept going like an old horse," he wrote to the Tuan Muda. After publicly installing the Tuan Besar, Captain Brooke-Brooke, as the Rajah Muda and his heir, he sailed towards the end of September, leaving the government with confidence in the hands of his nephews.

Shortly after his arrival in England the Rajah received the good news of the fall of Sadok, and the remaining cause of anxiety was removed from his mind. "Though confident of the result, the great difficulty of the undertaking, and the chances of war, caused me some anxiety. It is well over, and I congratulate you upon this success, which will lead to the pacification of the Dayaks and the improved security of Sarawak. You have the warm thanks of your Rajah and uncle, who only regrets he has no other reward to bestow but his praise of your ability, zeal, and prudence. You deserve honour and wealth as the meed due to your merit," so wrote the Rajah to the Tuan Muda on receipt of the news.

The Serikei and Nyalong Dayaks had received due punishment at the hands of the Tuan Muda, and peace now reigned along the coast and in the interior. The Kayans alone remained to be humbled, and the remaining actual murderers of Steele and Fox, Sakalai, Sawing, and Talip, whom they were harbouring, to be punished.

In the beginning of February, 1862, after a month's detention in Kuching suffering from jungle fever, the Tuan Muda left for England. After an arduous journey to the head-waters of the Batang Lupar and overland to the Katibas, by which river and the Rejang he returned, his health had broken down, and it became necessary for him to return to Europe to recruit. He had now been in Sarawak for nearly ten years, for the greater part of the time at Sekrang, and had been engaged in many very trying expeditions.

I left Sekrang and Saribas in perfect confidence in Mr. Watson's ability to manage affairs during my absence, and felt sure the natives would support him to the uttermost. For a few days previously I had conferred with all the Dayak chiefs, and begged them to desist from head-hunting and prevent their people running loose as in former times. They spoke well, and assured me of their staunch support.

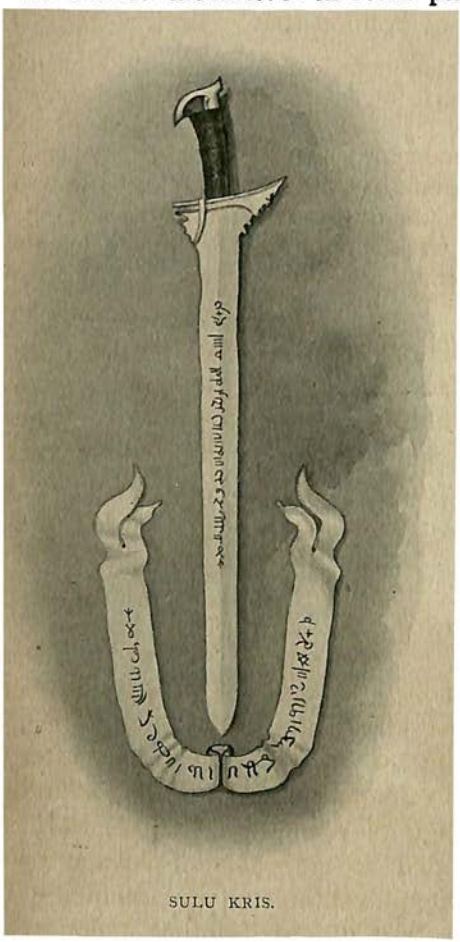
Amongst the many who had collected to bid him farewell was the octogenarian Sherip Mular, the intrepid enemy of former days, but who had long since become a peaceful member of society, and a friend of the Tuan Muda.

CHAPTER IX

THE LAST OF THE PIRATES

AS we have already noticed, the action of the *Nemesis* with a fleet of Balanini pirates off Bruni in May, 1847, following on the destruction by Admiral Cochrane of the pirate strongholds in North Borneo, for some years effectually checked the marauding expeditions of the pirates down the north-west coast of Borneo. This lesson was shortly afterwards followed up by the destruction of the Balanini strongholds by the Spanish, who a few years later destroyed Tianggi, or Sug, the principal town in Sulu. The Dutch had also been active. The pirates were crippled and scattered, and a period of immunity from their depredations

followed these vigorous measures. But the efforts of the three powers mainly concerned in the suppression of piracy subsequently relaxed, and the pirates, who had gradually established themselves in other places on the coast of Borneo and in neighbouring islands, gained courage by the absence of patrolling cruisers, and again burst forth.



SULU KRIS.

The year 1858 was marked by a great revival of Lanun and Balagnini piracy. Among others, a Spanish vessel was taken in the Sulu seas by Panglima Taupan of Tawi-Tawi: a young girl, the daughter of a Spanish merchant, was the only one on board not massacred. Taupan took her for a wife; and, as I wrote at the time, —"Alas for the chivalry of the British Navy! Sir ——, who was present when this information was given, said it was a Spanish affair, not ours." Another fruit of the Commission—officers dared not act.[1]

No more terrible fate can be conceived than that to which this poor girl, who had witnessed the murder of her father, was dragged; but had a British man-of-war been present it is doubtful whether her Commander would have interfered, unless he were prepared to sacrifice duty to compassion. For, after the notorious Commission, the Admiralty had issued stringent commands that unless a vessel should have, within view, attacked some *British* vessel or subject,

[1] St. John, *Life of Sir James Brooke.*

or that there was proof that she had done so, she was not to be molested. It was a revival of the former order of 1844, which, though it contained the same strict limit, allowed some latitude to a Commander.

The Rajah was rightly of opinion that

> These orders are a direct violation of our treaties with Holland and with Bruni.[1] Such a course of action with pirates has never been pursued before by any civilised nation, and is manifestly calculated to destroy our commerce, wherever it may be practically acted upon. Let either the Lanun or Chinese pirates know that we shall not molest them unless they commit depredations on the English flag, and they would sweep away a million of commerce on these seas, which was bound to English markets in native bottoms.

Though the inhabitants and commerce of neighbouring countries continued to suffer, up to 1861 the pirates gave Sarawak a wide berth. Then they began to appear on the coast again, but the little Sarawak gun-boats were on the alert. The principal object of the pirates was not to fight, but to obtain plunder and captives, and they afforded the gun-boats only a few long shots. Still they managed to capture a few people, including some natives of Madras, British subjects. But in 1862 they were out in increased numbers.

In that year Captain Brooke, the Rajah Muda, met with a great loss, his second wife died at Kuching, after having given birth to her first child.[2] This occurred on May 6, and after a few days it was thought by his friends that he might find some mental relief in change of scene and active work. Accordingly he was persuaded to undertake a voyage to Bintulu, and Bishop McDougall volunteered to accompany him so as to cheer and support him. Mr. Helms, agent of the Borneo Company, joined the party and was dropped at Muka. On the second day after the arrival of Mr. Helms, and when the Rajah Muda had left in the *Rainbow*, a piratical fleet of Lanuns, consisting of six large and many small vessels,

[1] By Article III. of the Treaty of May, 1847, the British Government engaged to use every means in their power to suppress piracy within the seas, straits, and rivers subject to Bruni.

[2] Miss Agnes Brooke.

appeared off the mouth of the Muka river and blockaded the place. For a couple of days they remained there, making excursions on land, and capturing thirty-two persons. Mr. Helms despatched a party of natives in a fast boat that succeeded in eluding the pirates, though they narrowly escaped capture, to make known the state of affairs to the Rajah Muda, and they found him still at Bintulu.

On May 25, the little screw-steamer *Rainbow*, carrying two 9-pounder guns, steamed out of Bintulu, and at once engaged a detachment of three Lanun prahus, one of which was sunk, and another captured; the third was engaged by the *Jolly Bachelor* and driven on the rocks off Kedurong point, and her crew taking refuge ashore were hunted down and killed by the Bintulu people. Learning from the captives the direction taken by the remainder of the fleet, the Rajah Muda stood out to sea in search of them.

After an hour or so, wrote the Bishop, the look-out at the mast-head reported three vessels in sight, right ahead. 'At this time it was quite calm, and when we came near enough to see them from the deck, we saw them sweep up to the central vessel and lay themselves side by side, with their bows at us, as if they meant to engage us in that position. However, as we went on towards them the sea-breeze sprang up, so they changed their tactics, and opened out in line with their broadsides towards us to rake us as we came up. Our plan was, as before, to shake them first and run them down in detail. Brooke did not give the order to fire until we came within 250 yards of them, and they opened their lelahs (brass swivel-guns) upon us some time before we commenced firing. They fired briskly and did not attempt to get away, even when we got all our guns to bear upon them; but as we steamed round to get our stem fairly at the sternmost vessel, they seemed to think we were retreating, and pelted us with shot more sharply than ever, directing their chief attention to us on the poop, where we had one man killed and two severely wounded in no time, and we should have suffered more if the temporary bulwark of planks, etc., had not stopped their balls.

After the first prahu was run down, I had to go below to attend to our own wounded as they came in, but I plainly felt the concussion as we went into the others. One of the vessels was cut right in two; the steamer went straight on without backing, and she sank the other, one half on each side of us. She was the largest, and had a valuable cargo, and much gold and bags of Dutch rupees. The pirates fought to the last, and then would not surrender,

but jumped into the sea with their arms; and the poor captives, who were all made fast below as we came up to engage them, were doubtless glad when our stem opened the sides of their ships and thus let them out of their prison. Few, comparatively, were drowned, being mostly all good swimmers. All those who were not lashed to the vessels or killed by the Illanuns escaped. Our decks were soon covered with those we picked up, men of every race and nation in the Archipelago,[1] who had been captured by the pirates in their cruise. One poor Chinese came swimming alongside, waving his tail over his head, and the other captives held up the cords round their necks to show they were slaves, lest they should be mistaken for Illanuns and shot or left to their fate. We soon picked up the poor fellows, and the Chinaman came under my hands, being shot through the arm. Many of the pirates we took were badly wounded, some mortally, the greater part were killed or disabled by our fire before we closed.

It is a marvel how these poor creatures live at all under the terrible tortures and ill-treatment they endure, sometimes for months, before they reach their destination and settle down as slaves to the worst of masters—very demons, not men. The captives state that when the pirates take a vessel, they kill every one who makes any resistance, plunder and sink their boats or ships, and when those they spare are first taken on board their own prahus, they put a rattan, or black rope-halter, round their necks, beat them with a flat piece of bamboo on the elbows and knees and the muscles of the arms and legs, so that they cannot use them to swim or run away. After a while, when sufficiently tamed, they are put to the sweeps and made to row in gangs, with one of their fellow-captives as a mandore or foreman over them, who is furnished with a rattan to keep them at their work; and if he does not do this effectually, he is "krissed" and thrown overboard, and another man put in his place. If any of the rowers jump overboard, the pirates have a supply of three-pronged and barbed spears, with long bamboo handles, ready to throw at them. When hit by one of these they can neither swim nor run, and are easily recaptured. They are made to row in relays night and day, and to keep them awake they put cayenne pepper in their eyes or cut them with their knives and put pepper in their wounds.

We found, on reckoning up, that we had picked up 165 people, and that 150 to 200 men had got to land from the vessels we sank near the shore. In every pirate vessel there were forty or

[1] Some were from the Celebes; some from both Southern and Western Borneo; some Javanese; some from the Natuna islands. Amongst them were a nadoka and the crew of a Singapore vessel, and a Malay woman of Singapore and her family. (From an account by the Rajah Muda, which is practically the same as the Bishop's.)

or fifty Illanuns, fighting men, all well armed, each having a rifle or musket besides his native weapons, and from 60 to 70 captives, many of whom were killed by the pirates when they found themselves beaten; among them two women. Seven of the women and four of the children were our own Muka people[1] and it was indeed most touching to witness the joy and gratitude of them and their relations when we returned them to their friends. Of the Illanuns we captured 32, ten of them boys. Some have died since of their wounds, the remainder are in irons in the fort here. The boys have been given out by Brooke for five years to respectable people to train and bring up. Very few of the pirates live to tell the tale; some captives assured us in the boat they were in there were only two out of the forty fighting-men who had not been killed or wounded by our fire, when we gave them the stem and cut them down.

Under the present system at Labuan, and the difficulties thrown in the way of our men-of-war against attacking these wretches when they are known to be in the neighbourhood, England with all her power and philanthropy is doing absolutely nothing towards putting an end to this abominable and most extensive system of rapine, murder, and slavery. It is impossible to estimate the destruction and the havoc, the murder and the amount of slave-dealing carried on by these wretches in their yearly cruises. The prahus we met were but one of the many squadrons that leave Sulu every year. Seven months had these wretches been devastating the villages on the coast, capturing slaves, taking and sinking trading vessels. Their course was along the coasts of Celebes, down the Macassar Straits to Madura and then along the Northern coast of Java, and the South of Borneo, up the Caramata passage to Borneo, to go home by Sarawak and Labuan. The other five pirate vessels parted company from them to go over to Balliton[2] and Banca Straits, and doubtless they too will carry their depredations right up into the Straits of Singapore and pick up English subjects and injure English trade, as those we met have done. But apart from all our local feelings, and danger from these people, it makes an Englishman out here ashamed to feel that his own dear country, which we would fain regard as the liberator of the slave and the avenger of the wronged, is in truth doing nothing against the system, fraught with incalculable misery to so large a section of the human race. For it must be remembered that the slavery these people suffer is far more crushing to them than the African who is taken as a savage to serve civilised and at least, nominally, Christian masters; but these are generally well-to-do men of civilised nations

[1] Some fifty people from Matu, Oya, and Muka were rescued.
[2] Belitong.

who are made the slaves of utter fiends, who work and torture them to death one year, only to replace them by fresh victims whom they capture the next. It is indeed *vae victis* with them, and I think it is the duty of every Christian man and every Christian nation to do all that can be done to rid the earth of such horrible and dangerous monsters, and to punish the Sultan of Sulu and all who abet and aid them. The Dutch and Spaniards are always doing something, but not enough, and during the last four or five years, these pirate fleets have been gradually getting more and more numerous and daring on these coasts, and now it is for England to rouse herself and complete the work of putting them down. Labuan is near their haunts and it might be done from thence. A few thousands spent out here yearly for the purpose would, I believe in my heart, soon effect more real and lasting good than the millions which are being spent on the coast of Africa. All honour is due to Sir James Brooke and his nephew, the Rajah Muda, and the other officers of the Sarawak government, who in spite of misrepresentation and factious opposition, through evil report and good report, have persevered for years in constant, steady, and systematic efforts to put down piracy on this coast and chastise these villainous marauders whenever they come into Sarawak waters. If the English government will now act with and assist us, we shall soon clear the Sarawak and Labuan waters of these pests. Assisted by the knowledge and experience of our natives, the work would be done surely and effectually; but single-handed the Sarawak government notwithstanding all it has done, cannot carry it out. We want means; if England or Englishmen will give us that, we shall gladly do the work, and feel that we are delivering our fellow-men, and doing our duty to God, who has commanded us to free the captive and deliver the oppressed. While at the same time we shall be averting a danger which is ever threatening us at our own doors, and has so long crippled the energies and resources of this country.

The original fleet of Lanuns had consisted of eleven prahus, but off the western coast of Borneo five had parted company and stayed behind to cruise around Banka and Belitong. Shortly afterwards one of her Majesty's ships fell in with three of them and attempted to take them, but the pirates managed to effect their escape.

On board the little steamer were at the time eight Europeans, the stalwart Pangiran Matusin, a fighting haji, and fifteen natives. But though the pirates were far more numerous, and were all well armed, yet the steamer

had the preponderating advantage of her screw, enabling her to ram each native vessel, cut her in half and send her to the bottom, so that there could not be doubt for a moment what would be the outcome of such a conflict.

The results of the fight were these :—

Pirates killed or drowned	190
Escaped	19
Brought prisoners to Sarawak . . .	31
	240
Captives killed or drowned	140
„ liberated	194
„ run away into the jungle, and subsequently rescued	56
	390

The prisoners, with the exception of the lads, were all executed. The lads were put to work on the gun-boats, and became excellent and trustworthy sailors—one, who was the son of a Lanun of rank, subsequently commanded the present Rajah's former yacht the *Aline*. Some of the captives were Dutch subjects, and some were British subjects from Singapore. In the captured pirate prahu there were found five Dutch and one Spanish ensign.

Sailing along past the delta of the Rejang, when off the pretty little village of Palo, which was hidden from their view, the pirates had observed a long canoe laden with nipah palm leaves, with a man in the stern and a woman in the bows, paddling for dear life to escape. A light canoe manned by half-a-dozen men was at once despatched in chase, and quickly overhauled the poor couple, the man crying out that he surrendered, and the woman screaming with fear. It was a pretty example of the biter bit—a neatly contrived trap. Gliding alongside to secure their apparently helpless captives, without troubling to exchange paddles for weapons, to their amazement the pirates saw an upheaval of the leaves and several armed men spring up, together with the steersman and the disguised man in the

bows. This startling development took the pirates so completely by surprise that they were all speared before they could seize their weapons. The Melanaus then quickly disappeared up a creek. Their leader was the late Atoh, a young man then, who afterwards became the Government chief of Palo. He is perhaps better known to the present generation as Haji Abdul Rahman.

The following translation of a paper written by a Nakoda Amzah, one of the rescued captives, and found amongst his papers after his death, gives a good account of the voyage of this fleet, and of its destruction. He was a Kampar (Sumatra) Malay, who lived in Sarawak since his rescue. He, his grandson, and another Malay were killed in the Rejang in 1880 by a head-hunting party of Dayaks. He was noted for his courage. He had been twice before captured by pirates. In this translation the word "pirate" is substituted for Bajau, Lanun, and Balanini, which the writer uses indiscriminately, and no doubt the crews of the piratical prahus were an admixture of these tribes.

Thursday, the 17th day of the month Sawal in the year of the Hejira 1278 (A.D. 1862). On this day Nakoda Amzah who was on a voyage to Samarang, with a crew of twelve men, was attacked off the mouth of the Jali by piratical prahus. These must have been eleven in all; they afterwards separated, six going along the coast of Borneo, and five coasting to Bangka. The attack was sudden, and they did their best to beat the pirates off, but after having fought them for about an hour, three of Nakoda Amzah's men were killed, and he himself was wounded in the head by a bullet. They then surrendered and were captured by the pirates; their own prahu was destroyed, and they were transferred to the pirates' prahus. The pirates then sailed to Pulo Kelam, where they hauled their prahus up a creek out of sight, there being a Dutch war vessel out of Benjarmasin on the look out for piratical prahus. This vessel steamed round the island without detecting them. They stayed here three days, and on the fourth launched their prahus and sailed northwards. The next day they again saw the steamer to the westward, so bore down to the island of Jempodi, where they stayed in hiding for six days. Sailing on, between Pakar and Kaiong the pirates captured a sampan with five men, and they also captured a woman. In two days more they reached the mouth of Katapang, and Kandang Krabu, where they made an unsuccessful raid; but they captured two men who

were out fishing. Two days afterwards they arrived at and attacked Pulo Kumbang, but the people were away inland, so no captures were effected. The next day they made a descent on Sati point, and captured three Chinese and three Malays. They sailed on for two days more, and then tried at Mas Tiga, but did not succeed in capturing any one. Two days afterwards they fell in with a Dutch Government coastguard, commanded by one Rasip. They engaged the coastguard, but owing to a strong westerly wind were forced to leave her. After four days, between Karamata and Pulo Datu, they fell in with a Sambas prahu belonging to Haji Bakir, she proved to be from Belitong, loaded with dry fish, sago, etc. The pirates captured her and her crew of five men. The whole of the next day they were chased by a war steamer, but they escaped by keeping in shoal water, and by night falling. Five days afterwards, off Cape Baiong, they fell in with Nakoda Daud's prahu from Sambas, but did not molest her. Three days later they had passed Cape Datu, and brought up for two days in Serabang bay and read the Ruah Selamat.[1] A three days' sail brought them to Cape Sirik, just before reaching which they fell in with two prahus which they attacked but were beaten off; they also chased a small boat but that escaped inshore. The next night at Bruit they killed two Melanaus, and captured two men and two women. Two nights after, off the mouth of Oya, they captured four Melanau women and two men. At Muka, which they reached next day, they captured four Chinese and two Melanaus, and the next night they brought up off Bintulu.[2] The following day was a fatal day for the pirates, for in the morning a steamer (the *Rainbow*) came out of Bintulu accompanied by a pinnace (the *Jolly Bachelor*). There was a pirate prahu lying close in shore and upon her the steamer immediately fired; twice the steamer fired and then the prahu's crew ran her into shoal water, she was followed and attacked by the pinnace, and her crew then escaped ashore, but were all killed by men from Bintulu and Miri. The steamer then attacked another prahu—and after firing into her twice rammed and sank her. Her crew were all drowned, killed, or captured, and the captives, about twenty in number, escaped on board the steamer. A similar fate overtook a third prahu, all her crew perishing, and her captives, about twenty-five in number, were rescued by the steamer. The steamer then gave chase to the three prahus in the offing and overtook them. These three prahus were lashed together, but

[1] Ruah Selamat—a prayer of thanksgiving. The pirates now calculated upon being quit of men-of-war, and that the rest of their voyage would be free from danger.

[2] There were many more people captured between Bruit and Bintulu, but the narrator probably only knew of those captured by the prahu on board of which he was a prisoner; he is at fault, too, as to the number of pirates killed, and captives rescued.

separated after being fired into. A short engagement ensued, which resulted in all three of the prahus being sunk, and their crews being killed or captured. Twenty-one captives were rescued from their prahus. And thus were the pirates destroyed off Bintulu by the Rajah of Sarawak's steamer the *Rainbow*.

Moreover it is estimated that the pirates lost forty men killed, and the steamer lost but one man killed and one wounded. And thus Nakoda Amzah and three of his men were rescued, and reached Kuching in safety. The remaining six were taken away in the other five prahus that sailed to Belitong and Bangka, and were probably taken by their captors to Sulu during the month of Haji.

Written in Kuching on Friday the 6th day of Dulkaidah, 1278 of the Hejira (A.D. 1862).

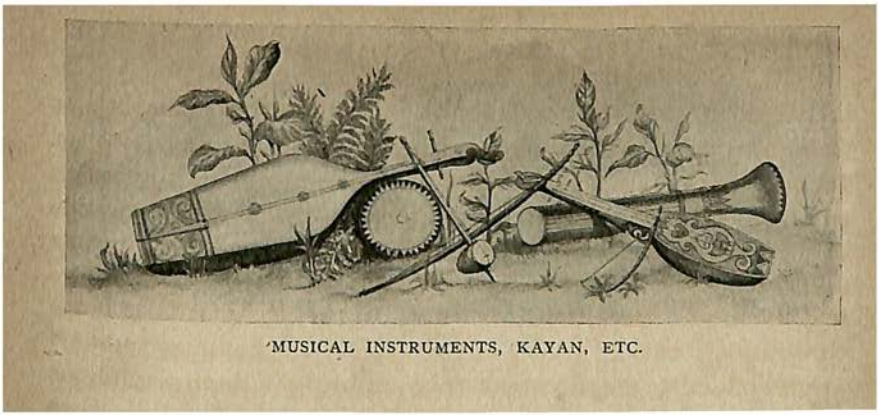
This was a lesson the pirates never forgot. From one of their prahus nineteen men escaped in a fast boat to carry the tale back with them, soon to spread to all the pirate haunts. Only once since, some seven years later, did the pirates venture down to the Sarawak coast, and then in no great force. They were attacked in Kedurong bay, and slain to a man by the Bintulu people led by their own chiefs. No more pirates were seen on the Sarawak coast afterwards.

The next year a squadron of steamers was sent from China to attack and root out all these pirates; but they came for no end except to sport their bunting, for nothing was effected. They could have had no intelligence officer with them with a knowledge of the positions of the piratical strongholds, and acquainted with the languages, habits, and appearance of the inhabitants of the northern coast of Borneo and the Sulu archipelago.

Though the pirates never troubled Sarawak again, they continued their operations in other parts for many years afterwards. As late as 1872, Dutch squadrons had to be sent out against them along the east coast of Borneo. And in 1874 piracy was so rife in the Sulu seas, and the Spanish gunboats so unable to suppress it, that the Governor-General of the Philippines issued an edict dooming the "Moorish marine" to destruction. The Spanish cruisers were to destroy *all* prahus proceeding from the Sulu islands or Tawi Tawi. Their crews were to be

conveyed to Manila to labour on public works, and those found armed were to be punished by the Military Courts. It was hoped that these untameable and seafaring races would be thus compelled to live by agricultural pursuits alone. This merciless condemnation of peaceable traders and voyagers as well as the evil-doers naturally led to gross injustice, and to intense hatred of the Spaniards. Even those not bearing arms, engaged in peaceful pursuits, if apprehended, were doomed to compulsory labour; whereas those found armed, met with short shrift—and all were compelled to be armed for their own protection.

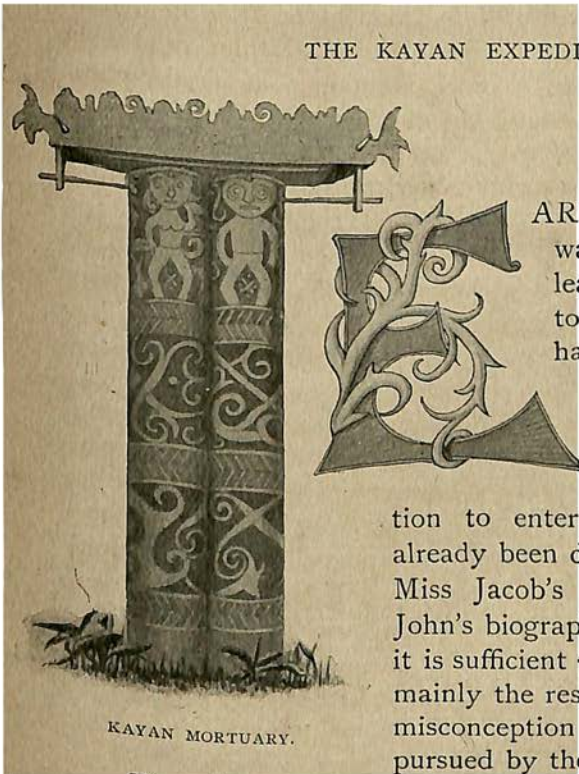
In 1879, the pirates of Tungku, a place near Sandakan, the last stronghold of the Balanini and Lanun pirates in northern Borneo, made several excursions along the coast capturing as many as 200 people. Then the place was destroyed by H.M.S. *Kestrel.* (It had been attacked before by the *Cleopatra* in 1851.) Shortly afterwards the British North Borneo Company established their government in North Borneo, and piracy virtually ceased along the coasts of Borneo.



MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS, KAYAN, ETC.

CHAPTER X

THE KAYAN EXPEDITION



KAYAN MORTUARY.

EARLY in 1863, the Rajah was again obliged to leave for Sarawak, owing to certain complications having arisen, due to the acts of his nephew, the Rajah Muda.

Into this matter it is not our intention to enter at length. It has already been dealt with fully in both Miss Jacob's and Sir Spencer St. John's biographies of the Rajah, and it is sufficient to say here that it was mainly the result of an inexplicable misconception of the policy being pursued by the Rajah in England.

The formal recognition of Sarawak was the sole proposal before the British Government. It is true the Rajah trusted that having once gained this England would not leave Sarawak to her fate in the event of the failure of his Government; but he wrote: "On every account of

feeling of pride, of attachment to the people, I desire the Government to be continued." The negotiations had not extended to any overtures for a transfer, or proposals of protection. Recognition at this time was all important, not only to give a status to the Government, and confidence to the people, but to encourage the introduction of capital, without which the country could not advance.

It was against the mistaken idea of a transfer of the country to England that the Rajah Muda protested. Yet a short time before he himself had suggested such a transfer to Belgium, and, a few years previously that the country should be sold either to England or to the Borneo Company.

We may mention here that the negotiations with Belgium had fallen through the previous year. The reason is not difficult to discover, for the Rajah wrote: "I wrote to you about the Duke of Brabant and my talk with him. His views must change greatly before I entrust our people to his guardianship."

The Premier, Lord Palmerston, and the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Lord John Russell, with other influential members of both Houses, were now very favourably inclined towards the Rajah and Sarawak. Lord John Russell had pledged himself to lay the statement of facts as prepared by the Rajah before the Law Officers of the crown for their opinion, and should it be favourable to bring the question of recognition of Sarawak before the Cabinet.[1] The Law Officers were called upon to decide whether Sarawak was independent of or feudatory to Bruni. The decision was favourable, for Lord John Russell subsequently wrote to the Rajah: "If your authority is undisputed, he (Lord Russell) is now ready at once to propose to the Cabinet the recognition of Sarawak as an independent State under your rule and Government."

Before his return to England the Rajah heard that recognition had been granted, though he was not officially notified of the fact until his arrival there. It was full and complete; and a Consul was appointed to Sarawak for

[1] From a letter of the Rajah's dated September 9, 1862.

whom an *exequatur* was asked of the Rajah.[1] The Rajah's forethought, which we have already recorded, that "time brings changes, and may work on the British Government" was thus fully justified. The Duke of Newcastle, Lords Palmerston and John Russell, Sir G. Grey, the Honble. Sidney Herbert, and Mr. Gladstone had been members of the Cabinet that issued the Commission, as they were now members of the Cabinet that granted the long refused recognition.

The Tuan Muda had accompanied the Rajah from England. He had assumed the surname of Brooke by the desire of his uncle, and this had been decided upon before the defection of his brother had been known. The Rajah desired it because it was the name of the ruling family, and it would remove confusion and ambiguity, and place his nephew in a clearer position before the world. The Tuan Muda refused to take the title of Rajah Muda, or to be formally recognised as his uncle's heir, trusting that his brother might pave the way to reconciliation and to his reinstatement.[2]

Whilst the Rajah remained at Kuching to restore order, and to introduce proper systems into the various departments, the Tuan Muda returned to Sekrang, where he was received with many demonstrations of good feeling. The population turned out and towed and escorted his pinnace up the river, and salutes were fired wherever he passed. But they were not more glad to welcome him, than he was to see them. He then visited all the outstations as far as Bintulu. Muka he found prosperous, and the people happy. He then returned to Sekrang to prepare for the expedition against the Kayans.

This powerful tribe has already been spoken of as living far inland on the head-waters of the Rejang. They were a continual trouble to the Dayaks who lived on that same river, but lower down, raiding their country, taking heads, and making captives, whom they tortured to death. Their country was not easily accessible, on account of the rapids

[1] Mr. G. T. Ricketts was appointed Consul, January 19, 1864.
[2] Captain Brooke died the same year as the Rajah.

in the river. The first rapids on the Rejang are about 170 miles from the mouth; these passed, the river is navigable for sixty miles, then ensue further rapids for about five miles, and then again it is navigable for fifty more. The upper rapids, called those of Makun, are the most serious and difficult to overcome, so serious, indeed, that the Kayans did not suppose it possible that an enemy could ascend above them.

But it was necessary to chastise and bring these troublesome neighbours into subjection. Before the Tuan Muda had left for England an ultimatum had been sent to Akam Nipa to deliver up the murderers of Steele and Fox. They had been committing great depredations on the lower Rejang, and Mr. Cruickshank, the Resident there, had appealed to the Government at Kuching to bridle them. Not only were the murderers of Messrs. Steele and Fox with them, but, as we have previously mentioned, they had lately descended and made a treacherous attack on the Katibas Dayaks, who had stood true to the Sarawak Government. Professing friendship, they had seized an occasion when most of the men of Katibas were absent, and had killed seventeen of the men who had remained at their homes, and a hundred women and children. Their captives they tortured in the most horrible manner, hacking them with knives and gouging out their eyes before putting them to death. And not only were the men thus treated, but also most of the women. They burnt fourteen long houses, or villages, and decamped.

Then they had engaged a man named Paring to lure some of the Dayaks into an ambush. Paring, a Kayan, had married a Dayak wife, and when he came to Katibas to visit his wife's relations he persuaded eighteen men to accompany him into the Kayan country to propose terms of peace, and when they demurred he made himself responsible for the safety of the whole party. Having thus overcome their fears he led them to a place where the Kayans, under their chief Oyong Hang,[1] were lurking in waiting for them.

[1] Oyong Hang was the chief of the Bintulu Kayans, and was at one time friendly to the Government, but he had thrown off his allegiance and joined Akam Nipa.

Oyong is prefixed to the name of a Kayan on the death of his firstborn; Akam, on the death of a younger child.

Eleven were at once bound hand and foot, but seven managed to escape into the jungle, and after several days returned in a famished condition to Katibas. The eleven were conveyed up the river, and on their way were carried into every Kayan house to be tortured by the women. On arriving at Oyong Hang's abode, one of them named Boyong was singled out to be sacrificed so as to attend in the abode of spirits the soul of Oyong Hang's son, who had lately died. He was to be buried alive under a huge wooden pillar, the mausoleum of Oyong Hang's son, early on the following morning. However, during the night, Boyong and another effected their escape, ran into the jungle, and found their way to the foot of the first rapids after twenty days' wandering. They were then in such an exhausted condition that they found it impossible to proceed further on foot, accordingly they lashed themselves by rattans to a log in the river, drifted down stream, and were eventually picked up and rescued.

OLD PUNAN MORTUARY.

All the remaining men were strangled by the Kayans. The scoundrel Paring, not thinking that his villainy had been disclosed, had the audacity to go among the Dayaks again, when he was seized and brought to Kanowit, where he was sentenced to death. But when in confinement, awaiting the approval of the sentence from Kuching, he effected his escape. The alarm was, however, at once given, and he was pursued into the jungle by the Dayaks and killed.

In an expedition such as was contemplated, the Rajah

or his deputy was obliged to obtain the voluntary assistance of his subjects. He had no paid army, he did not even provision the host for the expedition.

On this occasion the Tuan Muda consulted some of the chiefs at Sekrang as to the feasibility of attacking the Kayans. The Dayaks were never unwilling to join in such an excursion, though the only inducement that could be held out was loot, and relief from further annoyance. But it was laid down by the Government that no woman or child was to be molested.

As the chiefs thought that the proposed attack might be made, arrangements were pressed forward, and on May 19, 1863, at sunset, two guns were fired as a preparatory signal for the start from Sekrang, and the Tuan Muda led the party that was to proceed thence down the Batang Lupar and coast to the mouth of the Rejang, picking up on the way contingents of volunteers. Mr. Watson was at Kabong (Kalaka) at the head of a detachment, and Mr. Stuart Johnson was waiting at Kanowit, along with Sergeant Lees in charge of guns, muskets, and ammunition.

At mid-day on the 20th, the expedition started from Sekrang, "My crew were mostly old followers and servants who had been with me for years. Our boat was in perfect order, well painted and decorated with flags; for nothing tells so much as pride instilled and *esprit de corps* encouraged in the minds of the people."[1]

On the 21st, Lingga was reached and Banting visited. The natives there, the Banting or Balau Dayaks, were not eager to join the expedition as they were behindhand in their farming operations; however, after some hesitation and delay, they followed. On the 23rd, Kabong was attained, the town at the mouth of the Kalaka river. Here were Malays, useful fighting men, but for all that they showed reluctance to unite in the expedition. This is easily explicable, as they were apprehensive of attacking tribes at such a distance, and whom they had been bred up to fear as the most powerful in Borneo. And the Malays, unlike the Sea-Dayaks, though braver, do not love fighting for the sake of fighting. They shirked, but they went.

[1] *Ten Years in Sarawak*, from which this account is taken.

On the 24th, at starting the contingent consisted of sixty boats, with an average of forty men in each, and pushed up the mouth of the Rejang to Serikei, and Mr. Watson had gone on with forty boats from Saribas. On the following day Sibu was reached, where lived the Banyoks. Tani had been their chief, the conspirator who had been sentenced to death by the Tuan Muda, as mentioned in a previous chapter. But now Tani's son, Buju,[1] at the head of his fighting men, readily joined forces to those of the Tuan Muda. On the 29th at 2 A.M. by hard paddling, Kanowit was reached. "At daylight our force had congregated about the village and on each bank of the river, which was so broad that thousands of boats would not have made much show. After having coffee, I commenced work with Sergeant Lees in examining all the stores, arms, and ammunition. The heavy guns and shot had been already despatched by the Kanowit and Katibas boats, which were now two days' start ahead of us. I had arranged that the foot of the first rapids should be our rendezvous, and the enemy were reported to be six days distant above this point. It took the greater part of the day distributing arms, ammunition, and sundry other things to be carried by the force. Our Europeans of the party were Messrs. Watson, Cruickshank, my younger brother, Sergeant Lees, and Lucas (the Captain) of the *Venus*.

"*26th.*—The principal natives persuaded me to remain over to-day or I would have pushed on to lose no time in this fine weather. They require time to settle many little matters with which they are particular. Some made their wills, others sent letters to their nearest relatives, acquainting them with their last wishes, and all our boats needed much preparation. The one prepared for me, into which I had to shift all my things, was sixty-six feet long, shaped like a coffin and totally devoid of elegance and beauty. She consisted of a single tree hollowed out and round at the bottom, but raised a little at her extremities. When the hollowing out is done, a bow and a stern-piece are fastened with rattans; they have not a nail in them; two light planks are also tied on top and then they are complete.

[1] See chap. vii. p. 107.

Some have much speed, and are capable of carrying from forty to seventy men with a month's provision on board. They are adapted for passing the rapids, are buoyant in the falls, and the crews are able to use a long sweeping stroke with the paddles, such as could not be managed in shorter boats.

"29*th*.—As the fort clock struck eight, a gun was fired as a signal for starting, and about eighty boats left together; others had been going on during the night, and many were still behind. The current ran strong against us, and we were forced to hug the bank.

"The banks above Kanowit are steep, and Kanowit itself may be said to be the first pretty spot in the Rejang river, but above it is much variety of scenery—windings of the river, hills and hillocks of every shape."

As they ascended, ruined habitations and deserted paddy-fields were passed, that had been ravaged by the Kayans; to put a term to their violence a fort had been erected at Ngmah, between Katibas and Kanowit. This was now dismantled by the Tuan Muda on his way up, and he took the men and guns along with him. Above the junction of the Katibas with the Rejang for over a hundred miles the country was uninhabited.

On the 31st, the Baleh river, the left hand branch of the Rejang, was passed. Here the character of the scenery changes, the sides become craggy, and the river rolls over masses of rock, and through veritable gorges, with a swift current.

On June the 1st, the foot of the first rapid was reached, where the rendezvous had been appointed. Here all those who had gone on before were assembled in thousands. "Groups of Dayaks in all directions—some lounging on rocks, or on the patches of white sand in the bight, others mending their boats which they had hauled up in the most favourable places. Many were squatting round fires and cooking. Bright colours of clothes, flags, and painted boats were interspersed among them."

A council was held that same afternoon, and further proceedings were discussed. A hundred chiefs were present,

and the Tuan Muda spoke, arranging the order of the bala, and insisting that the lives of women and children must be spared, and that the chiefs should be held responsible for the conduct of their followers. He was followed by Balang, "an ugly little broad man, with the jowl of a hog," the chief of Katibas, whose house had been burnt by the Kayans, all his property carried off, and many of his relatives and people killed. "I have no wish to return," said he, "if this expedition is unsuccessful. They may cook my head if I can't cook theirs."[1] The force then consisted of 300 boats carrying 12,000 men.

On the following day the ascent of the Pelagus rapids was begun. The boats were forced up by the men with poles in their hands, and were aided by others on the banks hauling with ropes; whilst others again, where the water was shallow, were immersed in it pulling and shoving.

"Men seemed like ducks in the water. Swimmers and divers all had their duties, and the amount of exertion of this kind which the natives will undergo is simply wonderful. They keep it up hour after hour in the coldest mountain stream, jumping on to and over places where an Englishman could not gain a foothold, as the rocks are slippery as glass, and many of the ridges are not over three inches wide, making one giddy to look at them."

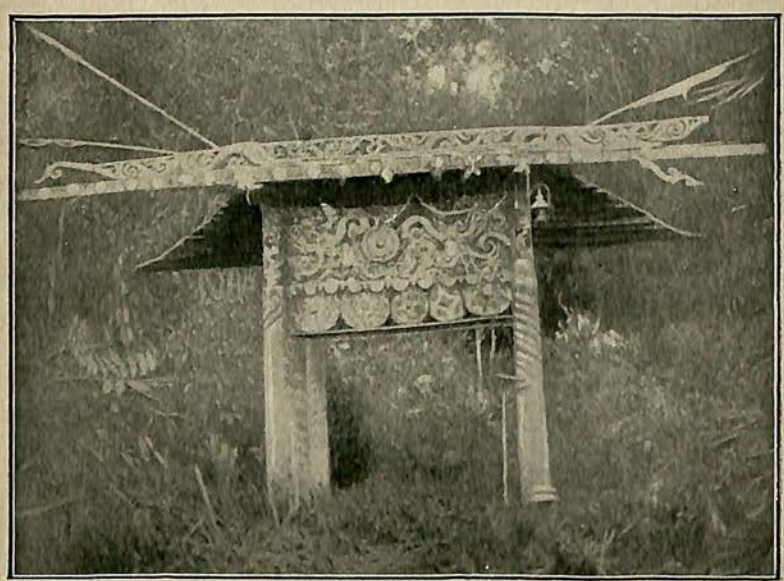
After a while the first portion of the rapids was safely surmounted, and a basin of calmly flowing water was reached. But this was not far, it afforded a breathing space before the next difficult point was reached, a perpendicular fall of ten feet. Here was a portage; provisions, arms, and ammunition had to be carried by land, and the boats hauled over sixty feet of a steep rocky incline, covered with water when the river was full, but now left dry. In the process, however, a good many of the boats went to pieces, and the crews had to be partitioned among the others.

This was followed by another fall, that had to be surmounted in the same way. "This last was a terrible job, and at every foot gained, I thought my coffin would have gone in two, as she creaked piteously. But at last we gained

[1] For the fate of this chief see chap. xii. p. 320.

the summit of the first rapids. Here we stopped, as the crews required rest, and the sun was piercingly hot." The whole length of this first rapid is four miles, and the breadth of the river six hundred yards. Not one third of the force had as yet surmounted it, and some were discouraged and made no attempt to do so.

Next day, the 3rd, the Tuan Muda's thirty-fourth birth-



KAYAN MORTUARY.

day, the coffin was advancing up stream where the river was broken up by islets and running between them, like a mill race, followed by the boat containing Mr. Cruickshank and Mr. Stuart Johnson, when, in punting, it was driven against a submerged rock and at once began to fill. Seizing his gold watch and chain, the Tuan Muda sprang into the water and swam to the boat that followed and was taken in; but provisions, the Tuan Muda's sword, spyglass, rugs, etc., all new from England, were irretrievably lost, and the whole crew were boatless; for the coffin was whirled down the stream.

"4*th*.—We advanced again as usual, and after about an

hour's hard pulling and many ropes, the stream became smooth and deep, and no more rocks were in sight. The reaches were long and straight, with a steady current of two and a half knots. The land was level without being swampy, and the soil appeared to be a rich yellow loam. What land for agriculture! and it extends for miles."

They were now on the fringe of the Kayan country, and they came on the remains of the house of the chief Akam Nipa, which he had deserted. The enemy had retired before the advancing force, and not one had as yet shown himself; though a small party, consisting of seven men, that had gone into the jungle hunting, three days before, thinking that the Kayans had all retreated, had incautiously lain down to sleep, when they were captured, tortured slowly to death on the spot, and then decapitated.

On the 6th, the Tekok rapids were encountered, and another abandoned Kayan village passed. The hills now began to show, and the river to flow over rocks and between bluffs. Had this spot been held by the enemy, it would have been most difficult to pass, but they had considered it best to retreat.

On the 7th, the abandoned village of the Sekapans[1] was reached and committed to the flames. There, farming grounds with the jungle freshly cut were found on both sides of the river. The scenery was very beautiful, but there was very little cultivation. The bays are sometimes five hundred yards in width, giving the appearance of a land-locked lake rather than a running river. The height of the hills varies under a thousand feet. Many fruit trees were on the bank.

"We were pulling with all our sinews, having continued it since morning, when at 3 P.M. we descried a sampan manned by a crew dressed in various colours, steering for us. They brought news of the enemy being fortified in a house[2] round the next point, and on the leading boats approaching they were fired into, and some were killed and others wounded. The enemy's house was already surrounded, they

[1] Belaga, where is now a strong fort, and a Chinese and Malay trading station, is just above this.

[2] The village of the Kajaman tribe, a short distance above Belaga.

said, but every time our fellows advanced some were shot down.

"Our crew pulled on, and on rounding the point, the stockaded dwelling of the enemy hove in sight, situated on a low spit. We steered across, out of the enemy's range into the bay, where all the boats of the advance party had collected."

Nothing could be effected till more of the force had come up, and till the field-piece could be mounted. This last was done during the night, and all was made ready for demolishing the fortified place in the morning; but the enemy, taking advantage of the darkness, had decamped in the night. It was afterwards ascertained that the bravest of the Kayans had been placed there, with strict orders to hold the place against the advancing flotilla. All the worst characters and principal leaders had been there too, and among them Sawing, Sakalai, and Talip. The house was now burnt, after having been rifled, and parties of Dayaks were sent in all directions to destroy the villages of the Kayans. Among the spoil taken was a Gusi jar valued at £150. In all directions smoke arose, and at night the flames could be seen leaping above the tree-tops from the burning houses.

The Tuan Muda now pushed on and passed the Majawa rapids.

"When we had reached the upper end of the gorge we could plainly survey the fall behind us—our force coming up one by one, with dense masses of thousands on the rocks, others wending an ant-like pilgrimage around the almost perpendicular banks and ledges. Toes and fingers often came in useful for clinging to every niche.

"Above this point we again reached smooth and deep water, running quietly. The crews were stopping and plundering things thrown aside by the enemy as they retreated. We pulled in untroubled waters for only an hour, and then arrived at dangerous rocky places, gradually getting steeper and steeper. The stream rushed past, and numbers of the boats were damaged. Fortunately we had picked up many native boats. The channels wound circuitously

among very sharp rocks, over which we had to use ropes. Sergeant Lee's boat was smashed, and he and his crew were deposited on a rock for some hours. We came to for the night in a bight, surrounded in every direction by rocks. The leaders of our force lost one man here; as he was taking out a rope, an enemy blew a poisoned arrow into his chest, which knocked him down, when his head was cut off."

On the 11th, the foot of the Makun rapid was reached. But for some way below the great cataract the river eddies and boils and plunges over rocks, and races between projecting fangs and islets. Here for two hours they had to toil with poles and ropes. The Makun rapid is a descent of the river in one great slide, with swirls and whirlpools, and with such force that it is only possible to ascend it, one boat at a time, pulled by ropes, and with two or three in her punting to control her movements, and prevent her being stove in against the rocks.

The ascent was begun on the 11th, and successfully accomplished. But fifteen boats were lost.

"I resolved to push on with the force we had, viz. 150 Malays and about 100 Dyak boats. Watson and Stuart were now boatless, and they also had to harbour in Fitz's boat, which had become the refuge of the destitute. A satisfaction prevails at having overcome the greatest obstacle in the approach to the Kayan confines. We proceeded about five miles, and towards evening received news that some captives had been taken. The enemy held nowhere and were pursued like sheep. I at once decided to go no farther, as our work of destruction would serve as a sufficient punishment for these people, who have proved themselves a most dastardly set of cowards, running on every occasion, leaving their children and women at the mercy of the Dyaks. These stupid inhabitants trusted to the superstitious traditions of their forefathers to guard them without the help of man, and now awakened to the mistake of their impregnability, too late. They resorted to their heels on every occasion; and two young boys yesterday chased up a hill two men equal to the boys in arms, both parties having swords only.

"Our warlike munitions have been useless, and the gun

only employed in firing twenty-one rounds on the bank in the afternoon. A boat arrived this morning, bringing three captives, one of whom I determined to leave on the bank to take a message, after we had left, to Oyong Hang. At sunset we collected the few chiefs, and the captive, a middle-aged woman, was brought before us. I told her, by means of an interpreter, that we attacked their country, because they had taken part against our friends and the subjects of Sarawak, and had harboured the three chief murderers of Messrs. Fox and Steele, named Sakalai, Sawing, and Talip. Whoever befriended them must necessarily become our enemies; besides, they had made several attacks on the Dyaks. I gave her a 12-pounder shot and a Sarawak flag, which were to be presented to Oyong Hang for him to make his choice. The latter was an emblem of peace, which would provide him with a safe-conduct to Kanowit, in order to open peaceful relations. The shot was an emblem of war, which we should conclude he had accepted if he did not shortly make his appearance with the flag. All attacks by Dyaks would be forbidden for the present, as it was our desire to be on friendly terms.

"The Dyak from whom I took the captive complained bitterly, and said he had lost a mother and sister, killed by the Kayans, and now wanted her (head) in exchange. I gave them to understand plainly that whoever touched her would suffer death.

"13*th and* 14*th*.—We waited for loiterers, who provoked me by their dilatoriness. Some had been wounded by poisoned arrows, but the only effect was feverishness. A few had ghastly wounds from spears. There had been more dreadful sights in this campaign than I had bargained for. Many women and children even had been killed by our people, who state, with some degree of truth, that in their excitement they had mistaken them for men, as they wore head-dresses similar to the dress of the men in this country. I resolved on any future occasion when I should have to call out the Dyaks, that a heavy fine should be imposed on any one perpetrating such acts. Still, at present, they can scarcely be expected to comprehend such a rule, as many

are now thirsting for revenge, smarting under the loss of wives, mothers, and sisters, mercilessly tortured and killed by the Kayans, who have always been in the habit of practising the blackest treachery and making sudden attacks when professing the staunchest friendship.

"On looking over our force, and counting those passing, I calculated that we must number five hundred large boats, containing about fifteen thousand men—Dyaks of some twenty different branch tribes, who had mostly been each other's enemies in former times."

On the return of the expedition, Kanowit was reached on the 17th, and thence the Tuan Muda went back to his station at Sekrang, and waited there for nearly a month before a deputation of Kayans arrived, bearing the flag that had been left with the captive woman. They numbered seventy men, and came to profess their desire for peace in the future. They reported that their chief Oyong Hang had summoned the people to a conference, and then and there had cut down Talip, and his followers had put Sakalai to death, but Sawing, suspecting what would be the determination of the Kayans, had escaped a few days previously.[1]

Accordingly the month of August was appointed for the gathering of a large assembly of the tribes to conclude a peace with the Kayans. There were, however, several hitches, and the meeting did not take place until October.

"The Kayan peace was concluded this month, when the chiefs arrived at Kanowit for that purpose. They met the Dyaks, and a pig was killed, according to custom. The terms and points to be sacredly attended to were all discussed before the Resident of the place. Some of the chiefs of the Keniah country were also present, and expressed a desire for trade and friendship. They talked of removing down the river. At this meeting there were representatives of 25,000 souls, who were all strangers to us, although living within the limits of Sarawak territory. This peace had been the great event of the year 1863, and leaves Sarawak without an enemy in her dominions, and without an inter-

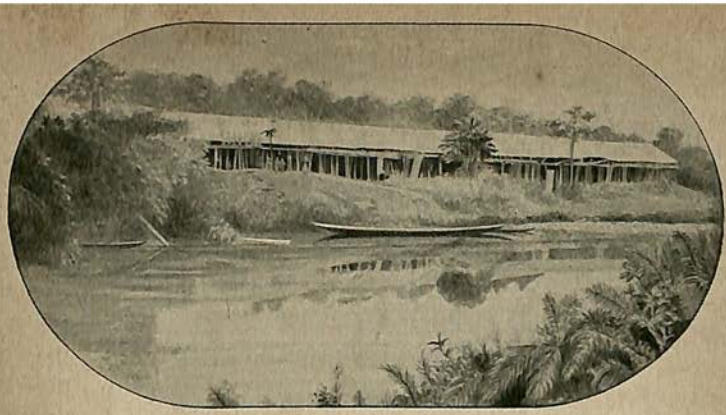
[1] Talip was a Matu Melanau of good birth; Sakalai was a chief of the Kanowit tribe; and Sawing was half Ukit and half Tanjong.

tribal war of any description. This is the first time the country has had peace."

In December, Sawing, the last of the murderers of Fox and Steele, was given up, tried, and executed.

"And now," says the Tuan Muda, "the deaths of those who were private friends and public servants, and who had occupied a distant and isolated out-station, have been completely avenged."

The Rajah remained in Sarawak till after the subjection of the Kayans, and then, having handed over the Government to the Tuan Muda, left in September, 1863, and "bade farewell to the people and the country he was never to see again."



A SEA-DAYAK HOUSE OR VILLAGE.

CHAPTER XI

THE END OF THE FIRST STAGE

THE RAJAH'S TOMB.

WE are drawing near to the close of the first stage in the History of Sarawak. It had opened with great hopes. To his mother the Rajah had written in 1841: "I trust there may be marked out for me a more useful existence, that will enable me to lay my head on my pillow and say that I have done something to better the condition of my kind, and to deserve their applause," and again, "I hope that thousands will be benefited when I am mouldering in dust," and these hopes have been fulfilled. But the last period of the Rajah's life was clouded with sorrow, disappointment, and pecuniary anxieties.

He had practically given up the government in 1863,

though he reigned for five years longer, and could make his will felt when need be. His health had broken down, and he wrote on May 29, 1863: "I cannot stand the climate and work," and in that year he left Sarawak for good, having installed his nephew, the Tuan Muda, as administrator. He was then only sixty, but for over twenty years his life had been full of anxiety, and had been a continual struggle against adversities, the most serious caused by the "malignant and persevering persecutions"[1] of his own countrymen, to whom he had turned for a little sympathy and a little help, which would have cost England nothing. In his policy and his actions he had been guided by no personal ambition; the great desire of his heart had been throughout the extension of British influence in the Far East, the improvement of trade, the suppression of piracy, the horrors of which he had witnessed, and the amelioration of the lot of the oppressed and suffering natives, whom he had come to love and esteem for their many good qualities.

With regard to the other countries included in the general policy of the Rajah, this book has little to do. It suffices to note that had that policy not been discredited, Siam,[2] the Sulu archipelago, the whole of New Guinea, and a greater part of Borneo might now have been under British influence. To the Rajah's unaided efforts, frowned upon at home, England owes it that Sarawak, Bruni, and Labuan are not now Dutch Residencies, and North Borneo, through conquest from the Spaniards, an American colony.

By his enterprise Sarawak, weakened by civil war and oppression, was converted into an independent and cogent State, and became a check upon any further advance of the Dutch northwards; and their strong diplomatic objections to the Rajah's presence in Sarawak shows what they had in view. Moreover, the treaty he effected with the Sultan of

[1] Lord Palmerston, Debate in House of Commons, July 10, 1851.

[2] Sir Spenser St. John says that, "ever since our Mission to Siam (of which the Rajah was the head, having been appointed Special Envoy by the Government) in 1850, Chaufa Mungkat (then Prime Minister, but very shortly afterwards he became the King) had kept up a private correspondence with the Rajah of Sarawak, in whose doings he showed great interest." This King afterwards presented the Rajah with a Siamese State barge, still in use, and a gold snuff-box. We mention this to show the power of the Rajah's influence, and to what good purposes that influence might have been put.

Bruni in 1847 effectually prevented any settlements other than of an English character being established in northern Borneo.

From southern Borneo England had retired in favour of the Dutch, and, previous to this, after the disaster of Balambangan, and its withdrawal from Bruni, had ceased to take any further interest in northern Borneo, nor was any attempt made to re-establish its prestige there, or to suppress piracy, even after Singapore had been founded in 1819. As usual, England had to wait for a man of action and resolution, and twenty years afterwards, though, fortunately, when not too late, he appeared in the person of the late Rajah. Such a man also was Sir Stamford Raffles, who saved Singapore and the Malay peninsula to England. It is almost a parallel case.

The members of the East India Board were furious, and the Ministers of the Crown were "excessively angry." Indeed had it not been for Raffles . . . it is certain that Singapore would have been abandoned by the British. Raffles made it, and Raffles saved it. . . . Raffles' genius and patriotism were rewarded by endless worry, by the disapproval of his employers, and by public censure from his country's Ministers.[1]

But the Rajah abandoned the larger policy as hopeless, and devoted his life and his means to his adopted country; and here the British Government, influenced by Gladstone, Cobden, Sidney Herbert, and their Little England followers, did its best to paralyse his efforts.

"My duty has been done at any cost," he wrote sadly, "and the British Government will be responsible for the consequences which must follow upon its abandonment of Sarawak: I do not mention the treatment I have personally received at its hands, for I seek no favour, nor expect justice, and I shall close a troubled career with the conviction that it might have been useful to my country and honourable to myself and a blessing to the native race, but for the indifference, the inconstancy, and, I regret to say, the injustice of the British Government."[2]

In an introduction to his nephew the Tuan Muda's *Ten Years in Sarawak*, written in January 1866, he expressed

[1] *British Malaya*, p. 71; Sir Frank Swettenham, K.C.M.G.
[2] Extract from a letter to Lord John Russell, dated December 10, 1859.

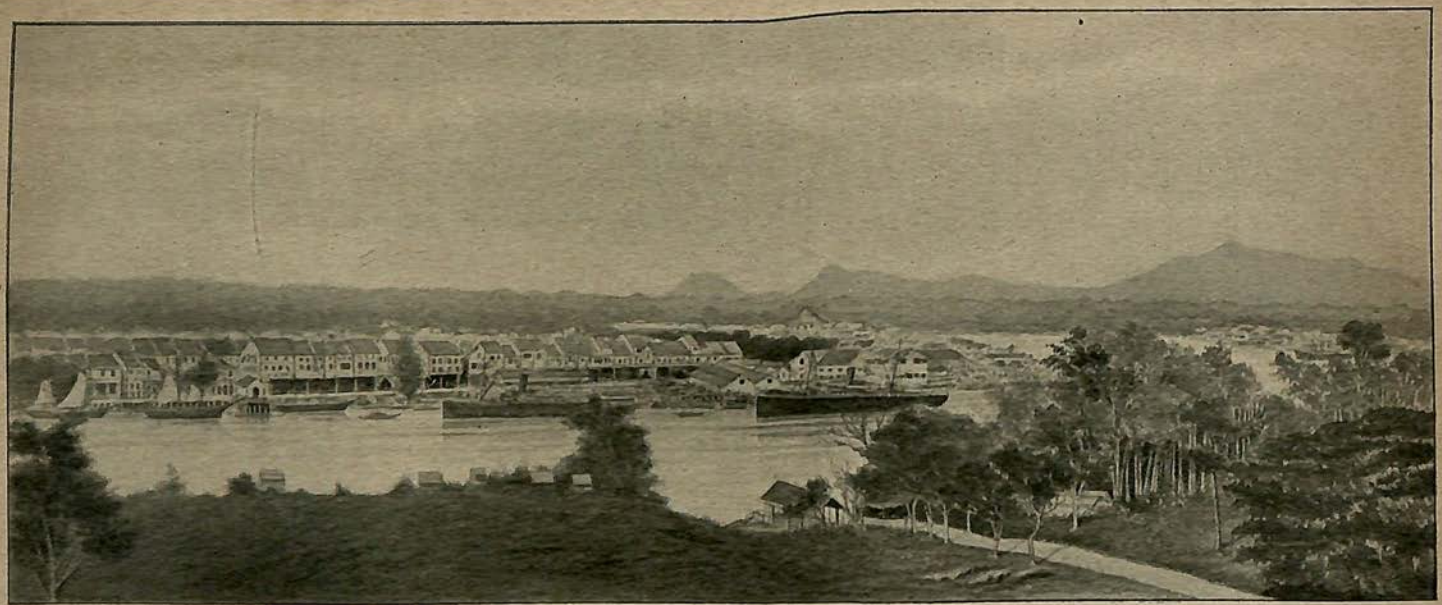
what had been the ambition of his life, and his disappointment at its non-fulfilment.

I once had a day-dream of advancing the Malayan race by enforcing order and establishing self-government among them; and I dreamed too that my native country would desire the benefit of position, influence, and commerce, without the responsibilities from which she shrinks. But the dream ended with the first waking reality, and I found how true it is, that nations are like men, that the young hope more than they fear, and the old fear more than they hope—that England had ceased to be enterprising, and could not look forward to obtaining great ends by small means perseveringly applied, and that the dependencies are not now regarded as a field of outlay, to yield abundant national returns, but as a source of wasteful expenditure to be wholly cut off. The cost ultimately may verify the old adage, and some day England may wake from the dream of disastrous economy, as I have awakened from my dreams of extended usefulness. I trust the consequences may not be more hurtful to her than they have been to me.

Since this, I have found happiness in advancing the happiness of my people, who, whatever may be their faults, have been true to me and mine through good report and evil report, through prosperity and through misfortune.

From the very commencement of his career in Borneo he had invited the support of the British Government "to relieve an industrious people from oppression, and to check, and if possible, to suppress piracy and the slave trade." He was anxious to see a British Settlement established, under the direction of others if necessary, and he was prepared to transfer his rights and interests to any successor. He looked upon himself in the light of "an agent whom fortune had enabled to open the path," and he felt "if a case of misery ever called for help, it is here, and the act of humanity which redeems the Dayak race[1] from the condition of unparalleled wretchedness will open a path for religion, and for commerce, which may in future repay the charity which ought to seek for no remuneration." His wish had always been that the country should be taken under the wing of England, and, though he at first justly asked that what he had sunk into it of his own private fortune should be repaid him, he was finally prepared to waive this consideration if only

[1] The Land-Dayaks of the Sadong, Sarawak, and Lundu rivers.



KUCHING (UPPER PART).

England would adopt the struggling little State. Failing this, he desired that the British Government would extend a protectorate over the State, so that capitalists should be encouraged to invest money for the development of its resources. But even recognition of Sarawak as an independent State was not granted till 1863. Protection was not accorded till 1888, and then it was offered, not asked for, and was granted, not in the interests of Sarawak, but for the safeguarding of Imperial interests, lest some other foreign power should lay its hands on the little State.

Recognition, for which the Rajah had striven for so many years, being at last granted, filled him with the greatest satisfaction. But considering the past history of Sarawak, and bearing in mind how well that country has since done without extraneous aid, it would seem to have been a pity that Sarawak ever attracted the attention of England, and that the Rajah ever sought for encouragement or protection there. Sarawak has stood the test of nearly seventy years as an independent State, and continues its prosperous career, without owing anything to any one, and requiring only to be let alone. But financial troubles had overtaken the State in the latter days of the Rajah, and to him these were an endless source of worry and anxiety. From 1863, to the time of his death in 1868, his letters to his representative in Sarawak, the Tuan Muda, were almost always on this subject. To matters relating to general policy, there is in them little reference to be found; though throughout they express constant forebodings in regard to the future of the raj. "Alone, burdened with debts, with few friends and many foes, how are you to stand without support," he wrote to the Tuan Muda; the last years of his life were clouded by a dread of evils, for he placed too much weight on public opinion, which was generally as erroneous as it was inimical.[1] In 1863, the whole responsibility was thrown upon the present Rajah's shoulders, to whom it was left to find a way to establish the revenue on a sound basis, and to reduce a large debt without sacrificing efficiency. The Government under the present Rajah practically commenced in that year.

[1] Mr. Templer to the Tuan Muda, March 1872.

Sir Spenser St. John says, in his *Rajah Brooke*:—

"In the autumn of 1866 he (the Rajah) received a severe shock. His nephew, the Tuan Muda, wrote that he had sold the steamer *Rainbow* to pay off a debt due to their Singapore agent—a debt incurred through careless extravagance in carrying out his many public works at a time when funds were scarce. For a moment it almost stupefied him, as this steamer had not yet been paid for," and "Sarawak without a steamer, he felt assured, would sink back into its old state of insecurity; and therefore another steamer must be had. By great exertion, he succeeded in raising the necessary funds, and purchased a vessel which was christened the *Royalist*."

Sir Spenser must have trusted to his memory, which played him false. The Sarawak Government had then another and a larger steamer, the *Heartsease*,[1] and the Rajah was having the *Royalist*[2] built in England to carry mails and merchandise to and from Singapore. He was consulted about the sale of the *Rainbow* and sanctioned it, for he wrote to the Tuan Muda on March 6, 1865, "We are quite agreed as to the advisability of selling the *Rainbow*," the purchase money to go towards paying for the new vessel he was having built. The Singapore agents were instructed to remit the money home, but, without the knowledge of the Tuan Muda, kept it to cover an over-draft. This over-draft was not incurred to pay expenses of public works, but for absolute necessaries. The Rajah had but little trouble to raise the balance due on the *Royalist*; and even this was not necessary, for a Singapore Bank at once advanced an amount equivalent to the balance due on the *Rainbow*, which was remitted to England.

At Burrator, his little out-of-the-world Devonshire seat, on the edge of the moors, the Rajah was perfectly happy so long as not troubled with bad news from Sarawak. He devoted himself to the country-side folk, who were greatly attached to him. His life was one simple and contented; he enjoyed the exceeding quietude, and he was happy in trying to make others happy. Riding and shooting, so long as his health permitted, were his amusements, parish

[1] Built in Singapore, and commissioned in September 1865.
[2] Launched in March 1867.

affairs, and the improvement of his little property, his chief interests.

The longing to return to his people was strong upon him. But, as time advanced and his strength diminished, he foresaw that what had become the desire of his life would be denied him. Some three years before his death he wrote to the Tuan Muda, "Farewell, think of me as well content, free from anxiety, and watching your progress with pride and pleasure."

Largely assisted by the late Sir Massey Lopes, who owned the land in the parish, he "restored" the Parish Church, and was instrumental in a new school being provided. The church contained a magnificent rood-screen, richly carved and gilt, extending across the nave and aisle; indeed it was the finest specimen in that part of the county. Unhappily neither the Rajah nor Sir Massey could appreciate its artistic and antiquarian value, and it was ruthlessly swept away. No architect was employed, only a local builder, and the new work done in the church is as bad as can be conceived, such as was likely to proceed from the designs of a common ignorant builder.

On June 11, 1868, Sir James Brooke died at Burrator, leaving the succession of the raj to his nephew Charles Brooke, and his male issue, failing such to his nephew H. Stuart Johnson and his male issue. In default of such issue, the Rajah devised his said sovereignty, "The rights, privileges, and power thereto belonging, unto her Majesty the Queen of England, her heirs and assigns for ever."

He was buried in the churchyard at Sheepstor, and a memorial window to him has been placed in the church.

Dr. A. Russel Wallace, in *The Malay Archipelago*, 1869, says:—

> That his Government still continues after twenty years, notwithstanding frequent absences from ill health, notwithstanding conspiracies of Malay chiefs, and insurrections of Chinese gold-diggers, all of which have been overcome by the support of the native population, and notwithstanding financial, political, and domestic troubles—is due, I believe, solely to many admirable qualities which Sir James Brooke possessed, and especially to his having convinced the native

population, by every action of his life, that he ruled them, not for his own advantage, but for their good.

Since these lines were written, his noble spirit has passed away. But, though by those who knew him not, he may be sneered at as an enthusiast, adventurer, or abused as a hard-headed despot, the universal testimony of every one who came in contact with him in his adopted country, whether European, Malay, or Dayak, will be that Rajah Brooke was a great, a wise, and a good ruler—a true and faithful friend, a man to be admired for his talents, respected for his honour and courage, and loved for his genuine hospitality, his kindness of disposition, and his tenderness of heart.

Writing in 1866, the old Rajah said of his nephew :—

He is looked up to in that country (Sarawak) as the chief of all the Sea-Dayaks, and his intimate knowledge of their language, their customs, their feelings, and their habits far exceed that of any other person. His task has been successfully accomplished of stamping out the last efforts of piratical Malayan chiefs, and their supporters among the Dayaks of Saribas, and of other countries. He first gained over a portion of these Dayaks to the cause of order, and then used them as his instruments in the same cause, to restrain their countrymen. The result is that the coast of Sarawak is as safe to the trader as the coast of England, and that an unarmed man could traverse the country without let or hindrance. It is a great gratification to me to acknowledge my nephew's devotion to the cause to which my own life has been devoted. It is well that his strength has come to supply my weakness, and that his energies and his life (if needed) should be given to establish the governorship, and promote the happiness of the people of Sarawak. My career draws to its close, but I have confidence that no consideration will turn him from the work which I shall leave for his hand to do.

How deserved this trust was, has been made manifest by the present Rajah's own lifelong devotion to the interests of the people he was ordained to govern. On his accession, no change was made in the wise and liberal policy of his predecessor. Only such reforms and improvements, administrative or otherwise, consistent with that policy have been made. Up to the time of the first Rajah's death, no great progress commercially and financially had been effected, and it was left to his successor to promote the commercial and industrial advancement of the State. The Sea-Dayaks and tribes of the interior still required a strong hand and a watchful eye to keep them in order, and the subsequent

large additions of territory entailed greater responsibility and harder work.

In the gradual establishment of a government suitable to the country and its people, the main principles that have guided the late and the present Rajah are — that the natives should, through their chiefs, have a full though subordinate share in its administration and its councils; that their own laws and customs should be respected, though modified where necessary in accordance with the first principles of justice and humanity. That no sudden and wholesale changes disquieting to the native mind should be made, and that reforms should be very carefully considered from both the white man's and the native's point of view before being introduced, and that if carried out, it should be done gradually. Thus, without giving rise to any opposition or discontent, slavery, which was at one time in a cruel and oppressive form, by a gradual process of ameliorating the condition of the slaves, enlarging their privileges, reducing the powers of owners and increasing their responsibilities, in course of time ceased to be a profitable institution, and died a natural death without any sudden and violent legislation.

How that was done will be shown in the following chapter.

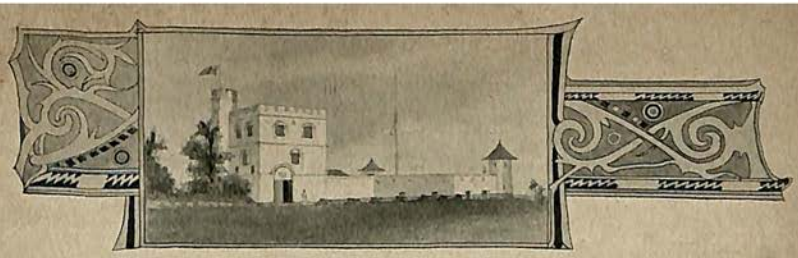
Among the Spartans a drunken helot was produced, staggering and imbecile, to show the young into what a disgraceful condition a man fell who gave way to liquor. And in Borneo, in the Sultanate of Bruni, the people had before their eyes a reminder of what was a bad, irresponsible government.

The old Rajah left behind him one of the noblest records of a life devoted to the cause of humanity, and of a task completed, which has been equalled by few men. His motives, untarnished by any desire for honours or for worldly advancement, were as pure as was his chivalry, which was without reproach. No better man, and few greater, have lived.

That those who vainly sought by the degradation of his position to enrich themselves should have turned round

upon him, and have vilified a character whose humane and lofty views were foreign to their own, is not so surprising as that ministers and politicians of the highest repute should have lent ready ears to their libellous and unfounded statements, and have treated with a total absence of a spirit of fair play a man whose policy and methods merited their fullest recognition and support.

> Ergo Quintilium perpetuus sopor
> Urguet? cui Pudor, et Iustitiae soror,
> Incorrupta Fides, nudaque Veritas
> Quando ullum inveniet parem?
>
> HORACE, Od. i. 24.

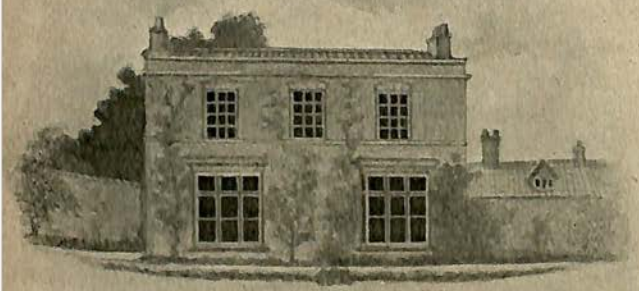


FORT MARGHERITA, KUCHING.

CHAPTER XII

THE BEGINNING OF THE SECOND STAGE

1868–1870



BERROW VICARAGE.

CHARLES BROOKE was proclaimed Rajah on August 3, 1868, throughout the territory. The ceremony in the capital and at the out-stations was simple. The people were assembled, the proclamation read, and the Rajah's flag saluted. He did not then take the oath, but this was administered at the next meeting of the General Council, on October 11, 1870, when the Rajah solemnly bound himself to respect the religion, rights, privileges, and institutions of the people; that no laws or customary laws would be

changed or modified without the sanction of the chiefs assembled in Council, that he would uphold the late Rajah's will in respect to the succession to the raj, that the people should have a voice in the selection of their chiefs, and that all cases arising amongst Muhammadans in respect to marriage, divorce, and inheritance should be settled by the Malay chiefs in accordance with Muhammadan law. At this meeting of the Council the English and native members took the oaths to endeavour to the best of their abilities to advise truthfully and justly for the good of the country, and to uphold the authority of the Rajah. This oath is administered to every new member upon appointment.

As has been mentioned, the Rajah had already been ruling the State for five years previous to his accession, and, though troubled with a few internal disorders among the Dayaks in the far interior, the general peaceful state of the country, which he had done so much to bring about, left him free to devote more of his time and attention to many needed improvements in the administration, and reforms in certain customary laws, which could only be effected as time smoothed out party feelings, racial jealousies and distrust, and all had settled down tranquilly under a government acceptable to the whole population, and which all were willing to uphold. How the Rajah succeeded as a wise and tactful administrator, the sure and steady advance of the country, its revenue and trade sufficiently testify. Not only has this been fully acknowledged by outside witnesses in a position to judge, but, what he values more, has won the approbation and confidence of his people.

No one was in a better position to bear testimony to this than the old Datu Bandar, Haji Bua Hasan, who, in spite of evil report and good report, won the respect of all classes. As already mentioned, he was a son of the gallant Patinggi Ali, and was appointed Imaum when Haji Gapur was degraded, and shortly afterwards was raised to the rank of Datu. He held his rank and office for over sixty years, and became the trusted friend of both Rajahs and of all his "English brethren." This is the simple testimony he bore on the opening of the new Court-house and public

offices during the absence of the Rajah in England, acting as he did as spokesman for his countrymen, and in the presence of many hundreds of them.

English brethren, datus, and people all at present within the Court. I am happy in being here in company with you to hail the anniversary of the Rajah's birthday, and to join with you in opening this our new Court-house.

I am here to bear testimony to the fostering care which the Rajah has ever taken of his children; we, who in years gone by were not only poor, but sunk under oppression, and heaviness of heart, by his assistance have become rich, and our hearts have waxed light within us under the blessing of freedom.

The Rajah is but following out the good work begun by his uncle in our regard many years ago.

The Rajah, in succeeding his uncle, has not attempted to suppress, to interfere with, or to decry our religion, therefore I say to you all, follow that religion truly and adhere to its teachings. Whoever there be who shall forget what the Rajah has achieved for him and his, that man is not worthy to be accounted a friend of the Government, but shall be looked upon as an enemy, and whoever becomes an enemy of the constituted Government is an offender also against the faith.

How is it possible for any of us, remembering all that the Rajah has done for our advancement, to go against him, or in any way to oppose him. On the contrary, it is our duty—the duty of all of us who subsist under the Government—to praise the Rajah, to pray for long life for him and his, and beyond this to ask that he may be blessed with fortune in his reign, so that we may long live happy, as we are now, under him.

It will be advisable here to give some account of the manner in which Sarawak has been and is still governed, in regard to which Sir Spenser St. John, who was out in Borneo, either in Sarawak or Bruni, for thirteen years, wrote in 1899:

The Government is a kind of mild despotism, the only government suitable to Asiatics, who look to their chief as the sole depositary of supreme power. The influence of the old Rajah still pervades the whole system, and natives and Europeans work together in perfect harmony.[1]

For administrative purposes the country is divided into four Divisions, with a Resident of the 1st Class, or Divisional

[1] *Rajah Brooke.*

Resident, in charge of each, but of late years it has been necessary to appoint only Divisional Residents to the 1st Division, the smallest in area, but the most important, as containing the capital; and to the 3rd Division, which extending from Kalaka to Kedurong Point, takes in about half the State, and contains about half the population. The Divisions are divided into Residencies, under charge of Residents of the 2nd Class, with Assistant Residents, and junior officers under them, all under the supervision of the Divisional Residents.

In Kuching the Divisional Resident is assisted by a Resident of the 2nd Class, and the executive work is under the control of the usual departments, directed by the Treasurer, Commandant, Commissioner of Public Works, Postmaster-General, Magistrate Court of Requests, Superintendent of Police, principal and junior Medical Officers, Superintendent of Surveys, and Engineer in chief, with English, Eurasians, Chinese, and native assistants. The Rajah is the supreme judge, and the other judges of the Supreme Court are the Divisional Residents, the Datu Bandar, the Datu Hakim, and the Datu Imaum. These also form the Supreme Council, with his Highness as President. The Supreme Council, which was instituted by the first Rajah, acting on the advice of Earl Grey, October 17, 1855, meets once a month for the consideration of all important matters in connection with the welfare and administration of the State. It is an established rule that in this Council the European members shall not outnumber the native members.

In addition to the Supreme Council is the General Council, or Council Negri (State Council), which was instituted by the present Rajah in April, 1865, to consolidate the Government by giving the native chiefs more than local interest in the affairs of the State;—to impress them with a sense of responsibility; to establish an uniformity of customs; and to promote a good feeling amongst them, and confidence in each other. Before the Council was inaugurated the chiefs seldom met one another, and were almost strangers except in name. Those in the

provinces rarely visited the capital; they knew little about, and took but a slight interest in public concerns not directly affecting their own districts. The members of this Council also form local, or Residency, Councils in their respective districts, with the several Residents as vice-presidents.

This General Council includes the above members of the Supreme Council, the Residents of the 2nd Class, Treasurer, Commandant, principal Medical Officer, and the leading Malay, Dayak, and Kayan governing chiefs, as well as the chiefs of other tribes, who have proved deserving of being appointed members. It meets once every three years, and at the last meeting, in 1906, there were present thirteen (absent five) Europeans and thirty-six native members. To quote from his Highness' speech made at that meeting:

> The General Council was organised for the purpose of settling any serious question or dispute relating to the welfare of the country whenever such questions should arise, . . . and he thought it was always a good thing that they should at least once in three years meet each other, exchange thoughts and views, and renew acquaintanceship.

Although it is the rule that the Council should meet at least once in every three years, it is liable to be convened at any time should any emergency arise, and this has been done upon more than one occasion.

Thus one was summoned in June, 1867,[1] to meet at Sibu, to discuss and decide upon the course to be pursued to ensure protection for the lives and property of Sarawak subjects trading in Bruni territory. A letter was drawn up by the Rajah in Council to the Sultan, laying the facts before him, and asking for justice and protection. This drew from him the rude retort that "the Rajah he knew, but the members of the Council he presumed were only his coolies."

Nor was this all. When the Rajah's principal Resident, with some of the leading members of the Council, visited Bruni, the Sultan refused to allow the latter into his presence, but relegated them to an outer chamber with persons of low rank.

[1] This was the first meeting of the Council.

Hitherto the Sarawak chiefs of all ranks and races had entertained a lingering sympathy and respect for the "Iang de Pertuan" (He that rules), the Sultan's more correct title, but these insults completely alienated their regard.

The details of administration in the out-stations are many and diversified, and in some of the districts entail a considerable amount of travelling. The Resident is the chief judicial officer in his district. He is responsible for the proper collection of the revenue and for the expenditure. The public works, the police, in fact the general conduct of affairs throughout his district, are under his supervision, and he has to be continually visiting the outlying villages. Usually there is an Assistant Resident and one or more junior officers to assist him. Besides his usual routine work, he must at all times be accessible to natives of all races and of all degrees. Though irksome at times, this duty is one of considerable importance. Some come to complain against decisions of their chiefs; some for advice and assistance; and some seek an interview under a trivial pretext, behind which, however, may be important news, which they would hesitate to deliver before others. The natives are the eyes and ears of a Resident, and through them alone can he derive early intelligence of the doings and intentions of his people. And not a less important duty is to become thoroughly acquainted with the people under his care, to keep in close personal touch with them, and to become conversant with their customs and ideas, for the law he administers must be made more or less consonant with these. Customs inconsistent with justice and common sense have long since been discarded for more enlightened rules, but those conformable to these principles, and suitable to the conditions of the people, have become recognised customary laws, and these vary among the different races.

For the settlement of divorce and probate cases among the Muhammadans, Courts have been established throughout the State. In Kuching the Court is presided over by the datus, those in the out-stations by the Malay Government chiefs, who also sit as magistrates in the Residency Courts. Such cases are settled in accordance with Muhammadan

law, modified as the Supreme Council may see fit, and subject to appeal to the Supreme Court.

Beside the permanent and salaried native officers, every Malay and Melanau village has its tuah,[1] or chief, who is elected by the people, and, if the selection is approved by the Government, he receives a commission from the Rajah, appointing him chief for a term of three years. These tuahs are responsible for the collection of dues and taxes, and have power as sub-magistrates to settle small cases. As a rule they are remunerated by commissions, though some receive salaries.

The Sea-Dayaks, Kayans, and Kenyahs have district-chiefs, as already stated, called pengulus, who are appointed by the Government; and each house or village has its recognised sub-chief. The powers and duties of the pengulus are similiar to those of the Malay tuahs, and they are similarly remunerated.

In 1872, certain criticisms upon the administration drew forth a rejoinder which appeared in the *Sarawak Gazette* of September 2, and as it so clearly lays down the Rajah's opinions and his policy we give it in full:

It is easy enough to find weak places in any system, and to give it credit on the whole for less than it deserves, because we disapprove of it in part. It is as easy, especially if one has played an important part in it oneself, to over-estimate its benefits. But in a semi-barbarous country, governed in conjunction with the old native authorities by a knot of foreigners, who are in advance of those they govern in knowledge and experience, it is hardest of all to judge impartially what has been done or is in progress. There are two widely different principles on which such a country can be judged; we will call them the Native and the European principle respectively. The first regards the old condition of things, established by custom and the character of race, as essentially natural, and is more or less adverse from changes, however slight, in what has these important sanctions. The second places the standard of Western civilisation before it, and is apt to judge rather harshly whatever falls far short of this, or is not, at least, in a fair way towards attaining it.

The common mistake Europeans make in the East is to exalt the latter of these principles almost to the exclusion of the other,

[1] Literally, an elder.

instead of using them as mutually corrective. And this mistake has its origin, not in reasoning or in justice, but in the imperious spirit which makes white men in the East believe themselves lords of creation, and their darker brethren kindly provided in more or less abundance for their profit and advantage. At any rate no man in his senses can expect a wilderness of barbarism to blossom like a rose in a day, or a perfect government to appear full grown at once; while it is as unjust to put the traditions of the natives and their social position out of the question and consult European notions only, as it is debasing to lower ourselves to the level of native ignorance and stolidity.

In accordance with these two principles, there are two ways in which a government can act. The first is to start from things as we find them, putting its veto on what is dangerous or unjust, and supporting what is fair and equitable in the usages of the natives, and letting system and legislation wait upon occasion. When new wants are felt it examines and provides for them by measures rather made on the spot than imported from abroad; and, to ensure that these shall not be contrary to native customs, the consent of the people is gained for them before they are put in force.

The white man's so-called privilege of class is made little of, and the rules of government are framed with greater care for the interests of the majority who are not Europeans than for those of the minority of superior race. Progress in this way is usually slow, and the system is not altogether popular from our point of view; but it is both quiet and steady; confidence is increased; and no vision of a foreign yoke to be laid heavily on their shoulders, when the opportunity offers, is present to the native mind.

The other plan is to make here and there a clean sweep and introduce something that Europeans like better, in the gap. A criminal code of the latest type, polished and revised by the wise men at home, or a system of taxation and police introduced boldly from the West is imposed, with a full assurance of its intrinsic excellence, but with too little thought of how far it is likely to suit the circumstances it has to meet.

We care not to set the two principles in stronger contrast, or apply either to the policy which prevails here, only when men set themselves to be critics their first business is to rate themselves at their proper level in the community, and remember that their own interest is not all that has to be considered.

The policy of ingrafting western methods on eastern customs by a gradual and gentle process has been attended not only with marked success but with appreciation by the

natives themselves. It has been the means by which old prejudices have been broken down, and reforms in laws and administration have step by step, and without friction or difficulty, been substituted for unjust and debasing customs. By preserving old customs good in themselves, modifying these where necessary, avoiding sudden and drastic changes, and, above all, by acting in conjunction with the native chiefs and in sympathy with their ideas, a faith in the integrity of the purpose of their white Ruler has been instilled into the minds of the people, and a feeling that whatever change he may advise will be primarily for their benefit.

I do not exaggerate, the Rajah wrote in 1870, when I say our chief success has been owing to the good feeling existing between the Ruler and people, brought about by there being no impediments between them; and that the non-success of European governments generally in ruling Asiatics is caused by the want of sympathy and knowledge between the Rulers and the ruled, the reason being the distance and unapproachableness of the Leader. If I were to exclude myself from Court I must necessarily withdraw myself from hearing the complaints, either serious or petty, of my people, who would then be justified in drawing an unsatisfactory and unhappy comparison between myself and my uncle, who was *de facto* the slave of the people, and left the country under *my* charge expecting me to carry out *his* policy.

Changes in laws and customs, which a few decades back would have been viewed with sullen distrust, are now readily accepted by the Malay chiefs, even those affecting their own strict religious laws. These as enacted by Muhammad were adjusted to meet the requirements of the past, but the Malay chiefs have so far advanced in their ideas that they are ready to admit that some of these laws may no longer be in accordance with present conditions. So by an Act passed in the Supreme Council an important rule contained in that code regulating the succession to property was modified as being opposed to modern ideas of fairness.

Before his accession, the Rajah had thoroughly gone into the question of slavery; in this matter he invited the opinions of all, and on his accession he was enabled to promulgate certain laws affecting the slaves, that met with

general approval. By these laws, the slave was protected against ill-usage. He was granted civil rights, and the privilege of freeing himself by the payment of a small amount, the maximum price being fixed at about £7, an amount which could easily be earned by a few months' hard work. The transfer of slaves from one master to another could be made only in, and with the consent of the Courts. No slaves could be sold out of the country, and no fresh slaves might be imported. To quote the *Sarawak Gazette* of December 12, 1872:

Before the arrival of Sir James Brooke, the Illanuns and other pirates from North Borneo took yearly trips around the island, making midnight attacks on peaceful villages, killing old men and children, separating mother and child, husband and wife, and carrying away hundreds of miserable wretches to be sold into slavery in the Sulu archipelago.

In Sarawak territory, Kayans and Melanaus sacrificed slaves to propitiate evil spirits. To ensure good luck to a chief's new house, the first post was driven through the body of a young virgin. When they were afflicted with epidemics, it was the custom to sacrifice a young girl by placing her in a canoe, and allowing her to drift out to sea with the ebb tide. At the death of a chief, slaves were tied to posts near the coffin of the deceased and starved to death, in order that they might be ready to act as attendants on their master in another world.[1]

These and a host of other atrocities were formerly enacted here. Amongst the Malays was found slavery of a milder form. Masters and slaves were, as a rule, on amicable terms, and the latter were well treated. Where, however, there was no law, and masters held absolute power over their slaves,[2] ill-usage occasionally followed as a consequence; and we could fill pages with stories of cruelties practised by Malay slave-holders in olden days.

Now on our coast piracy is a thing of the past. Inland, the barbarities we have described are no longer practised by wild and superstitious tribes; and although slavery is tolerated amongst the Malays, it is in such a mild form that the word is a misnomer.

The Government protects the bondman against cruelty and ill-usage, and acknowledges his legal rights. He can now obtain justice in the Courts, and by a wise regulation of the Government

[1] The poor creatures being solemnly admonished to attend well upon their masters in the next world.

[2] They held the power of life and death over their slaves.

he can purchase his freedom at a fixed moderate price, so that should he find his bondage irksome, he has an opportunity of freeing himself by energy and hard work.

The result is that the number of slaves in the territory is steadily decreasing. Some of the Malays have been known to emancipate their slaves at their death. Those who are now nominally slaves are treated so well by their masters that they are probably happier and better off than they would be as free men.

One great cause for the reduction in the number of slaves was that, knowing their masters no longer had power to drive them, and were bound to support them, whether they worked or not, they became lazy and unprofitable to their owners, who eventually found paid labour to be far cheaper, and were only too glad to be rid of them.

These regulations gave the death-blow to slavery. It now practically remained to the slaves themselves to choose whether they should change their condition or not; for energy on the part of a slave would enable him to procure the price of his freedom, as well as that of his wife and children, and that could no longer be arbitrarily fixed or refused by his owner; or by contracting his labour he could obtain an advance for this purpose. By degrees many availed themselves of this advantage, though others preferred to remain in a state of dependency. They were well provided for, there was no necessity to work too hard, and proper treatment was secured to them. Thus it came to pass that many owners lost their diligent slaves, and were left with the lazy and useless ones, who became an expensive nuisance. Their wives and children, however, remained slaves, as did those of men too infirm to work, but of these, too, boys freed themselves as they grew up, and girls by contracting marriages with freemen, and these could free their parents. But the Rajah was desirous of abolishing an institution that, though it was becoming one in name only, still remained a blot upon the country, and in this he had the support of the Malay chiefs, which many showed in a practical manner by publicly and unconditionally manumitting all their slaves. Having before prepared the

minds of the people for the great social change he wished to effect by bringing before the members of the General Council a proposal to abolish slavery, in 1883 he brought forward a bill for the gradual manumission of the slaves during the next five years, and for the abolition of slavery at the end of that period. But it became unnecessary to proceed to an enactment, for in 1886 domestic slavery had practically become a thing of the past, and at a meeting of the Council in that year the Rajah withdrew the bill.

As to the relations with Bruni, we shall deal with them in a special chapter. These relations, and those with the Netherlands Government, comprise the whole of Sarawak foreign policy, and the latter have of late years been conducted in a friendly spirit of co-operation in the mutual interests of the two countries, without undue and restrictive formality and red-tapeism — a marked contrast to the relations with Singapore, which has ever been jealous of Sarawak.

The relations with the Dutch had not, however, always been friendly, for on two occasions they had seized Sarawak trading prahus on the idle pretext of these being pirates. The second time was as late as 1865, and then two Sarawak and a Bruni prahu were seized in company by a Dutch gun-boat and towed into Sinkawang, where their crew were placed in prison in irons, and the vessels and cargoes confiscated. This drew a strong protest from the Sarawak Government, and after some detention vessels and crews were released, but without considerable portions of their cargoes. Heavy damages were claimed, but never paid, though the seizure was admitted to be wrongful.

This was a poor return for the relief Sarawak had afforded the Dutch coast, both from the ravages of the Dayaks of Saribas and Sekrang, and the pirates from the north. Before the action off Bintulu in 1862, the Dutch had been unable effectually to protect their own coasts, the many captives from Dutch Borneo then rescued being a sufficient proof of this, but after that action the pirates did not venture to pass Sarawak again, and the north-western and western coasts were freed from their visits. The

action of the Dutch in seizing these prahus was the severest blow Sarawak trade had suffered for many years ; the fast-sailing prahus might out-sail the pirates, or the well-armed ones beat them off, but from men-of-war steamers there was no escape.

The Rajah has from his accession kept a strict supervision over all, even the smallest details of revenue and expenditure ; all accounts of the Treasury and out-stations are submitted to him monthly, and no extra expenses beyond those provided for by his orders may be incurred by any department or in any out-station without his express sanction. His guiding principle has always been the strictest economy within limitations necessary to ensure efficiency. Upon his accession the public debt amounted to about £15,000, a considerable sum, with a revenue of only little over $100,000 ; this was exclusive of what had been sunk by the late Rajah—the whole of his fortune, which Sir Spenser St. John is wrong in saying stands to the credit of the Brooke family in the Treasury. In 1870 the revenue was $122,842, in 1907, $1,441,195, with a large surplus, and no public debt.

Besides the supervision of the Treasury, the Military, Naval, and Public Works departments are under the direct control of the Rajah, his daily routine in Kuching includes visits to the barracks, to the steamers and engineer's workshop, and to the jail, all which would be the work of the early mornings and evenings. The Rajah also presides in the Supreme and in the Police Courts, hearing and settling all cases and receiving petitions, and listening to complaints after the cases are disposed of ; seeing all, whoever they are, and whatever their occasion. After Court he visits the offices of the various heads of departments, and attends to any business they may have to bring before him. This is also done when he visits out-stations, and in the absence of the Rajah the same rule is observed by the Rajah Muda.

But little had been done by the first Rajah towards promoting the commercial and industrial development of the State. He had, indeed, induced the Baroness Burdett Coutts to start an experimental farm with paddy-working mills at

Lundu, and an experimental garden near Kuching, to teach the natives a better system of farming, with the use of the plough, and to introduce new products. But she had been unfortunate in the selection of managers; the experiments proved failures, and were abandoned in 1872.

Agriculture, the mainstay of all tropical countries, chiefly occupied the present Rajah's mind, but to quote from a speech made by him a few years after his accession :—

> I do not flatter myself when I say that I have tried my best to advance agriculture, but I have most signally failed, and am, in consequence, much disappointed. Nevertheless, I still entertain hopes that the time for its development is not far distant, and I am prepared to take any pains, to receive any amount of advice, and to undergo any trouble if only I can see my way to successfully spread gardens and plantations in the place of our vast jungles.

Many schemes to promote this industry had been attempted, and had failed; but the Rajah never lost sight of his purpose, and how he was ultimately rewarded with success a reference to the chapter dealing with agriculture will show.

We shall now notice the disturbances that occurred in the period 1868-70.

In July, 1868, the Rajah led an expedition against the Delok Dayaks living in the Upper Batang Lupar for causing trouble over the borders, and another in May, 1870, against the Beloh Dayaks in the Katibas for the same reason. The Katibas, who had hitherto been supporters of the Government, had been led astray by the chief Balang [1] in 1866, who then laid a well-planned trap to get the Resident, Mr. J. B. Cruickshank, into his hands to murder him. He was captured by the Rajah, and taken to Sibu, where he was executed.

Both these expeditions were successful, but no particulars of either are to hand. These expeditions, however, did not result in a final settlement of these disturbed remote districts. The Dayaks submitted, only to break out again, and the lesson had to be repeated several times. It will not be necessary or

[1] See chapter x. p. 287.

expedient to give an account of each of these. There is a tragic monotony about them—so many villages burnt, so many casualties to the punitive force, so many of the turbulent natives killed, and then a hollow peace patched up between the tribes concerned, with the usual ceremonies of killing of pigs.

The Sea-Dayaks still required to be watched and controlled, and "it would be strange if the Government had not met with difficulties in keeping in subjection 160,000[1] wild Dayaks, all possessing energetic souls for warfare." The Saribas, the most troublesome and toughest in holding out, eventually settled down into the most peaceful and law-abiding of the tribes, and became great traders, and thoroughly loyal. This was the case as far back as 1865, and in that year the present Rajah was able to write: "What an altered country is Saribas to what it was a few years ago. People are so quiet and peaceably disposed there now, that never a word of head-hunting is breathed." And the same may be said of the Sekrangs, who, with the exception of one lapse, caused by the falsehood and treachery of a once trusted chief, have remained true and faithful to the Government that had brought them into subjection. And in regard to all the Sea-Dayak tribes, then as now, it should be borne in mind that their uprisings, though bringing them into conflict with it, are never directed against the Government, with the above exception only, which is related in Chapter XIV. Like the Highlanders of yore, we may class the various tribes of the Dayaks having a community of language and customs as clans spasmodically at feud with one another; and their feuds are confined to the far interior of the State.

On the evening of November 28, 1868, the Resident at Muka, Captain W. H. Rodway,[2] and Mr. E. Sinclair[3] went for a walk to the mouth of the river, distant some two miles, leaving the fort in charge of the Sepoy Sergeant of the guard. That morning a Malay named Ganti, an

[1] This number includes the Kayan, Kenyah, and other inland warlike tribes.

[2] Afterwards Major Commandant S.R., joined the service 1862, retired 1883.

[3] Joined 1868; resigned 1873. He was at this time Assistant Resident of Bintulu, and was at Muka on a visit.

ex-fortman, had been sentenced to five years' imprisonment for a serious crime. He at once formed a plan with the other prisoners to rush the fort and effect their escape; and the culpable carelessness of the Sepoy guard soon gave them their opportunity. At 5 P.M. the prisoners were brought back from their work, and noticing that the whole of the guard, with the exception of the sentry, were outside the fort variously employed in the cookhouse, at the bathing place, etc., they walked in and closed the doors, whilst Ganti, who on a plea of sickness had been allowed by the Sergeant to leave his cell in the basement and sit on the floor above under the charge of the sentry, with a handspike killed the sentry. A Mr. Bain, a former employe of the Borneo Company, who was then a trader at Oya, and was at the time ill in the fort, was murdered in his bed by a Chinaman, whom he had imprisoned for debt.

The Resident hurried back to find that the fort with guns and ammunition were in the hands of the prisoners, who were firing at the natives, and whose position was impregnable. Nothing could be done but to send for help from Bintulu. The prisoners amused themselves with firing at the surrounding houses, but their aim was so badly directed that they did no harm to life, and but little to property. At last, being aware that they could not hold out against the force that they knew would be summoned to reduce them, they broke into the Treasury safe, and collecting all the property they could take with them, decamped in the night. The people, who throughout had behaved loyally, promptly went in pursuit, overtook the fugitives, killed every one of them, although some were Muka men, and recovered all the cash, arms, and property that had been carried off.

Mention has been made of the Sepoys. It may be here said how that some of these men came into the Rajah's service. Many of the Sepoys, who had been mixed up with the rebellion in India, and were sentenced to death, had their sentence commuted to penal servitude in the Andamans for life. The Indian Government proposed to the late Rajah to take charge of some of these in

Sarawak, and to this he consented, and fifty arrived from Port Blair in March, 1866. There were some soldiers, quite boys, and raw recruits, some of various other trades, and one or two were of superior rank. On reaching Sarawak, they all elected to join the military force, and were distributed among the out-stations. With very few exceptions, they proved themselves to be a steady and reliable set of men. They were treated as free men, the only stipulation imposed upon them was that they were not to leave the country. A few were pardoned and returned to India, the rest died as pensioners of the Sarawak Government.[1]

On May 13, 1870, an attack was made on Sibu fort[2] by a force of some 3000 Kanowit Dayaks under the noted chief, Lintong or Mua-ari. Sibu fort, which is situated on an island, was then in the charge of Mr. H. Skelton,[3] with Mr. H. Brooke Low as his assistant, and was manned by a force of about thirteen Sepoys. Mr. Skelton had been frequently warned of the impending attack, but gave no credit to these warnings, and would allow no extra arms to be loaded. That very evening, during dinner-time, a noted Dayak chief, Unggat, had come in to inform Mr. Skelton that the place was to be attacked. Mr. Skelton was angry at being interrupted during his meal, and vowed, that if no assault was made, the man should be imprisoned. When the place eventually was attacked, the chief paced up and down in the fort and would take no part in the defence.

It was the custom of the Sepoys to go out by the back-door before daybreak to perform their ceremonial ablutions, and of this the Dayaks were aware, and lay in wait about the exit to surprise them. But the Sepoys were on their guard, and the door was not opened. The Dayaks then attacked the fort in force, endeavouring to cut their way in with axes, but they were beaten off. Amongst the

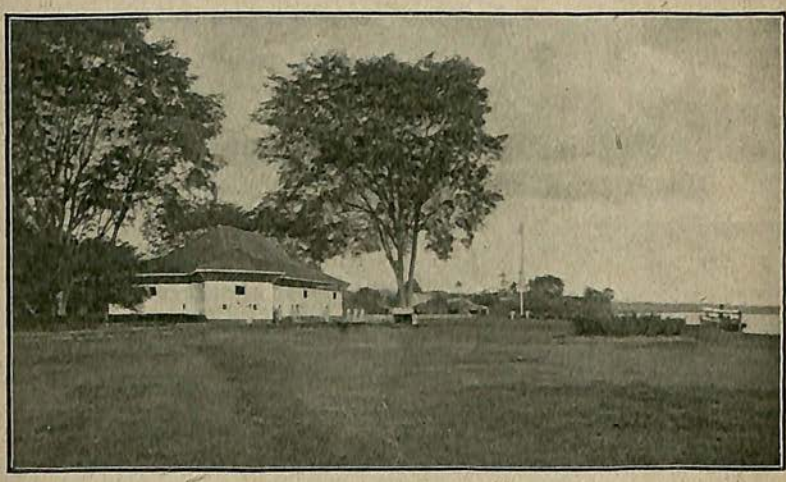
[1] The last in 1902.

[2] Built in 1863, when it became the Government headquarters in the Rejang. Sibu is the most important provincial town, and has a revenue larger than that of Labuan.

[3] Henry Skelton, joined 1866, died in 1873, immediately after being appointed Resident of Sarawak.

killed was Lintong's eldest son, a boy who had been the inseparable companion of Mr. J. B. Cruickshank, the Resident of the Rejang, who was then at home on leave.

The Sepoys behaved well, and had to be restrained from going out to fight the Dayaks in the open. Had the fort been taken, the Chinese quarters and the Malay villages would have fallen an easy prey to the Dayaks, and a general massacre would have ensued, as the attack was timed to take place when all the able-bodied Malays were away on their



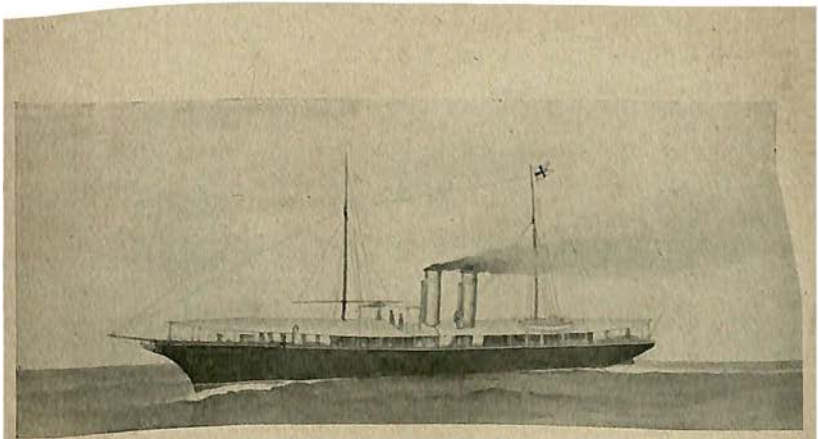
FORT BROOKE, SIBU
(The Forts at Bintulu, Muka, and Kapit, are similar.)

farms. This is the sole occasion on which an out-station fort has been attacked in force, and it revealed to the naked savages the fact that with their primitive weapons it was futile making such an attempt, except by surprise. But indeed, on this occasion, a surprise was intended.

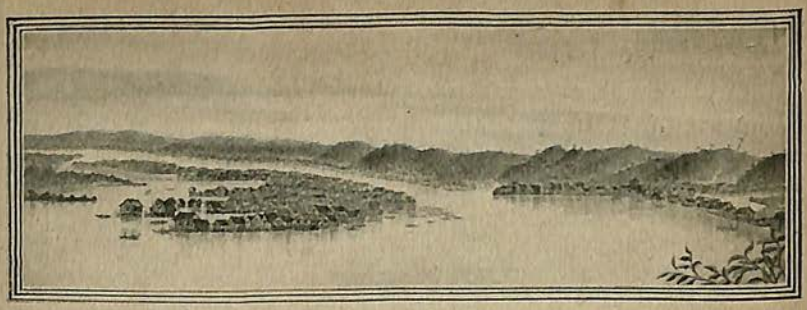
Lintong, the troublesome son of a troublesome father, had been a constant head-hunter, and, before the establishment of the station at Sibu, a scourge to the Melanaus living in the delta of the Rejang. He had before attempted to surprise Kanowit fort, and it was from his spear that Mr. Steele had had a narrow escape. He had, however, fought on the side of the Government in former days; and,

subsequent to the attack on Sibu, after having been deprived of his liberty for some time, he again became a supporter of the Government, and eventually a Pengulu. He died of snake bite in September, 1887.

The Rajah left for England in 1869, and went to reside at Burrator. In the same year he married Margaret Lili Alice de Windt, his cousin, daughter of Clayton de Windt, of Blunsdon Hall, Highworth, Wilts, and Dinnington, Northumberland, and sister to Mr. Harry de Windt, the famous explorer, who served in Sarawak as A.D.C. to the Rajah in 1872-1873.



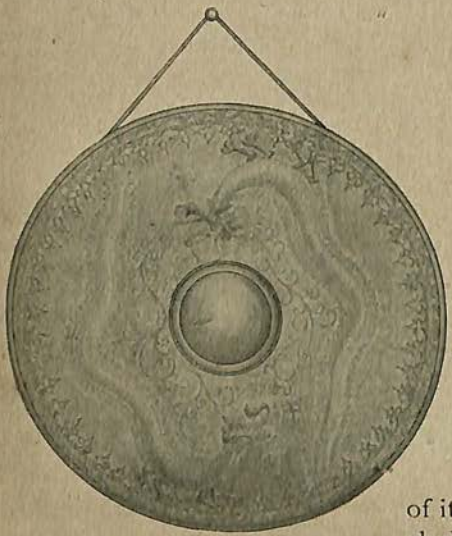
H.H.S. "ZAHORA."



DARU'L SALAM.

CHAPTER XIII

BRUNI



BRUNI CHANANG OR GONG.

A GOOD deal has already been said about that blot on the map of Borneo, Bruni, and of its Rulers, and in this chapter shall be given the history of the relations between the Sultans and the present Rajah since his accession, as well as of the policy of the Foreign and Colonial Offices in regard to that "wretched phantom the Bruni Government."[1]

Many chapters might well be devoted to the past and present history of Daru'l Salam, the Haven of Peace, the sublime Arabic title by which, with a characteristic disregard of the fitness of things, the Brunis proudly dignify their

[1] *Forests of the Far East*, S. St. John.

unhappy city, as they do their Sultan with the title of Ka-adil-an, the Just. But like morning dreams, these go by contraries. The story they would set forth would be a sad one, as may well be judged from what has already been related and from what will be told in this chapter, though a great deal more might be said. It would be interesting, too, as another example of British indifference to Eastern affairs. From the commencement, when nearly seventy years ago the attention of the empire was so strongly drawn to this nest of murderers and robbers, this haven of criminals, by the late Rajah, till the end, when in 1905 the British Government elected to adopt the bankrupt and depopulated remnant of the Sultanate, its policy in regard to that State has been remarkable for neither consistency nor astuteness.

During the last twenty years of his reign (1852-1885) the old Sultan, Abdul Mumin, who has been described as having the soul of a huckster, and who died at the age of over a hundred, devoted his life solely to the pursuit of wealth, and the unscrupulous means he employed to enrich himself produced great oppression and misery. Affairs of State were a secondary matter with him, and the ministers and pangirans went their ways unrestrained. Some of these pangirans, who are related to royalty, a few closely, others more or less remotely, exercise "Tulin" or hereditary feudal rights over districts, the ministers holding, ex-officio, similar rights over other districts; the unhappy people therein were completely in their power, and could be squeezed at their own sweet will. Others, not possessing such rights but armed with authority from the Sultan, easily obtained at a price, enriched themselves by forced trading.

The poorer classes of the Bruni Malays are hardworking and law-abiding; but when no man's property is safe from the rapacious grasp of the chiefs, thrift and hard work cease to have an object, and the country becomes dead to industry and enterprise. The inhabitants of the interior, and the Kadayans, an industrious, agricultural people, suffered under the same disadvantages. Like the Chinese, these people once cultivated pepper, but for the same cause gave up doing

so, which is not surprising when even their harvests of rice were not spared to them.

The late Mr. C. A. C. de Crespigny,[1] who had a considerable experience of Bruni and the country around it, writing upon the condition of the place in the seventies, says:

"A Pangiran of high rank, but of small means, went from Bruni to Kalias, and with his own hands murdered a Chinaman, his retainers keeping their hands in by the slaughter of one or more of the man's relations and dependants. The murderer then gutted the shop and returned to Bruni. It was stated that the Pangiran belonged to a Chinese secret society, as young Bruni in general is said to do, and that the head of the society, having a trade grudge against the poor fellow at Kalias actually paid the Pangiran $800 for the deed. Whether this was true or not would be an interesting subject for investigation; but that the man was murdered by the Pangiran's own hand, and his goods and chattels carried away to Bruni, is undoubtedly the case; and further that the Pangiran was not punished except by verbal reproof. Herein is anarchy.

"On another occasion at Kalias mouth, twenty-eight Chinese were killed by a band of marauders from up the river and neighbouring streams. A fine was imposed upon the river, but no murderers were caught. Herein was want of power.

"On another and later occasion, a Chinaman, also living at Kalias, was murdered by a band of ruffians from Padas Damit and other streams, together with his wife, child, and only servant. On this occasion two of the murderers were caught, taken to Bruni, and as they were men of no consequence, summarily executed. Herein is inconsistency.

"Men are enslaved without proper cause, and slaves are torn from their families and pass to other owners and other countries, against their wish."

The Bruni of the old days, the Bruni of yesterday, and the Bruni of to-day, are all one.

[1] Formerly of the Royal Navy, and the Labuan Civil Service. Joined the Sarawak Civil Service 1871. Was Resident at Muka, and subsequently Divisional Resident of the 3rd Division. Died 1884.

Although by treaty and by decree the trade of the coast of Bruni territory was thrown open to all, the Bruni pangirans used their utmost endeavours to retain it, and traders from Sarawak and Labuan were incessantly obstructed and interfered with. Competition, coupled with free trade, was not to the taste of these pangirans, and as the old Sultan was himself too much mixed up in trading transactions to exert himself to see that foreign traders received due protection, the pangirans were left a free hand to deal with them, and their high-handed proceedings were winked at by Sultan Mumin, if not actually encouraged. A Sarawak Nakoda, who had been trading with Bruni for some time, was suddenly attacked when leaving, and fired into by seven boats which had been lying in wait for him. He managed to escape himself, but lost his property to the value of $700. His boat was destroyed, and the Sarawak flag torn to pieces. Orders were sent down the coast closing some of the ports to Sarawak traders, and imposing prohibitive duties in others. One order recommended the people to go out of the country and "live under the white man in Sarawak till they rotted" if they would not pay the exorbitant taxes demanded of them. Sarawak people, collecting produce in the jungle, or even when fishing along the coast, had their goods and boats seized.

In reply to the Rajah's despatches complaining of these outrages, the Sultan expressed friendship for Sarawak and a desire to foster trade, and in one or two cases actually made reparation; but he excused himself in general by his helplessness to enforce his will on the turbulent and headstrong nobles. And, in fact, the difficulties did not lie in lack of a clear understanding and of formal agreements, perhaps not in a languid desire on the part of the Sultan to stand on good terms with the Rajah, but in the arbitrary conduct of the leading pangirans holding authority along the coast. Respect for treaties and for fair dealing formed no part of the mental equipment of these feudal tyrants, and the central power at Bruni was either too weak, or too timid, or too deeply involved to interfere with them.

In January, 1870, the Rajah wrote to Lord Clarendon:

"In regard to matters relating to the interests and welfare of the coast of Borneo to the northward and eastward of the territory under my control, I am led to understand that her Majesty's Government has no desire to direct attention to this part, with a view to bringing about a better system to further the ends of peace and trade, and to relieve the honester and lower classes from the gross and degraded position to which they are now reduced by the oppressive measures of the Bruni Government. H.H. the Sultan permits anarchy and bloodshed throughout his dominions, and there is no exaggeration in saying that this is carried on within sight of the British flag at Labuan."

The authorities at Labuan, which was a fully constituted Crown Colony, the Governor being also Consul-General for Borneo, were either purposely blind to what was going on at Bruni, which was but a few miles off, or were too much hampered in their actions by instructions from home to effect any reforms in the State. But, to quote from the letter of a Naval Officer of high rank, "Mr. J. Pope Hennessy" (afterwards Sir John Pope Hennessy, who was Governor of Labuan from 1867-1871), "had an object in upholding the Sultan and encouraging him in the oppression of his subjects, as that caused many to take refuge in Labuan." A little judicious advice, backed by the immense power which the Sultan and his nobles knew the Governor had behind him, would have effected much towards the amelioration of the lot of the natives, but nothing whatever was done. The Bruni Malays must "stew in their own juice," it was no concern of her Majesty's Government that Sarawak trade should be interfered with, for what was Sarawak to Britain? It was no concern of her Majesty's Government that the Sultan and his pangirans were breaking the heart of the people, killing the incentive to industry. It looked on with a cold eye, and with a callous heart.

As a colony Labuan was a failure. Only a few natives and Chinese had settled there, and there was little trade. Instead of being the medium through which reforms on the coast might be effected, Labuan for long stood in the way, by checking the spread of the influence of Sarawak along

the coast. The Foreign Office was guided by the advice of their Consul-General, and was rarely other than ill-advised, though the late Sir Henry Keppel "had pleaded the cause of civilisation that the Rajah of Sarawak should be encouraged and not thwarted in his attempt to advance." And he expressed "a hope that he might live to see the Sarawak territory extended to Bruni itself." Mr. J. Pope Hennessy in his address to the Legislative Council of Labuan in June, 1871, said: "The policy promulgated thirty years ago by some enterprising and benevolent Englishmen that the Dayaks could be civilised, and that Europeans could conduct the details of trade and administration in the rivers of Borneo has proved to be visionary."

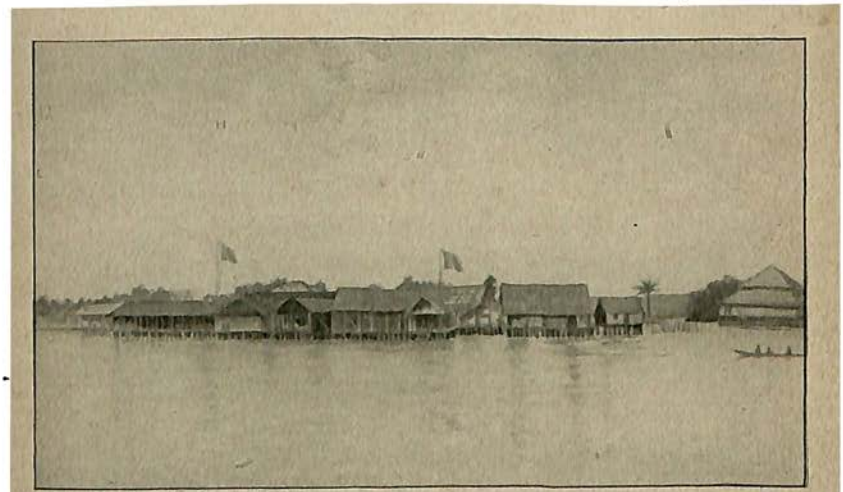
It is easy to imagine what would be the nature of advice tendered to the Foreign Office upon Bornean affairs by such a man. At the time when he made this statement Sarawak was in absolute tranquillity, and the trade of 1870 had nearly doubled that of the preceding year.

And, with exceptions, the Governors of Labuan were always more or less hostile to Sarawak, because jealous of it. Labuan was stagnant and Sarawak steadily advancing in vigorous life.

In April, 1872, the Rajah, accompanied by a staff of English and Malay officers, visited Bruni in the Government steamers *Heartsease* and *Royalist*. It was perhaps not unnatural that this visit was at first regarded with suspicion as being in the form of a demonstration against Bruni, to back unheeded protests against the maltreatment of Sarawak subjects, and the nonfulfilment of treaty engagements. But this impression was soon dispelled, and the Rajah was received by the Sultan, "a fat, kindly-faced old man of some eighty years of age," with cordiality and honour. The Rajah's main object in visiting Bruni was to obtain an effective guarantee that his subjects trading in Bruni territory should not be molested and unwarrantably interfered with. A treaty conceding all that the Rajah asked for was accordingly drawn up and ratified by the Sultan, and was satisfactory enough on paper. The Sultan solemnly undertook the redressing of injuries, guaranteed

protection to traders, and the imposition of fair and moderate customs duties only.

But this treaty, owing to the Sultan being powerless to enforce its provisions outside the capital, soon became worse than useless; for, relying on it being observed, Sarawak traders again ventured into the Bruni ports, only to meet with the same treatment as before. The extortion of outrageous customs dues went on as formerly. The Bruni nobles, "the most useless race that ever encumbered the



THE SULTAN'S PALACE.

earth,"[1] set themselves deliberately to frustrate every object aimed at in the treaty, and, so that they might keep the trade with its enormous profits to themselves, they plundered, and even killed those who ventured to compete with them. But their day was not to last for ever. The Kayans, driven to exasperation by the heavy fines and other extortions imposed upon them, eventually rose against these tyrants, and drove them out.

Next to the Rejang, the Baram is the largest river that flows into the sea on that coast. In its basin are congregated large populations of Kayans and Kenyahs.

In 1872, the Rajah, accompanied by the Ranee, visited

[1] St John's *Forests of the Far East.*

this river to ascertain for himself how far it would be safe for Sarawak subjects to trade there. He steamed a long way up the river, and was everywhere well received by the natives, who had been much depressed by extortion and were eager to be relieved from the thraldom in which they were held by Bruni. There had been no encouragement given to them to work the jungle produce in which their country was rich, except to purchase necessaries, and these could be obtained through their Bruni masters alone, and that at exorbitant prices. There was in consequence little trade at the time. But what this river is capable of producing may be shown by its trade returns at present. The exports, entirely of jungle produce, after the district had been for twenty years under Sarawak, amounted in 1906 to $272,223.

Although the Sultan had no real authority over the Kayans and Kenyahs there still existed among them a certain regard for him, and of this the Bruni Government took advantage. These races had never been subdued by the Sultans by force of arms. They never had voluntarily tendered submission. The restraint exercised over them was due mainly to the fact that the Brunis held the mouths of the rivers and consequently controlled the trade, and that trade was one in the very necessaries of existence. It was inevitable that the rulers of Bruni should resent, and resist to the utmost, the opening of the rivers to Sarawak traders, which would involve, as they well saw, the drying up of the source of their wealth.

The natives on the Baram had an exaggerated opinion of the power of Bruni, but this illusion was dispelled after a feeble attack made on the Kayans in September, 1870, which resulted in ignominious failure. Still, they were prepared to submit to such demands which, though extortionate, custom had taught them to regard as the Sultan's due, and they could not do without the imports, which they were precluded from obtaining elsewhere and from others, than Bruni and the hands of pangirans. But the rapacity of the pangirans became at last intolerable; and we will here give two instances illustrative of the

methods adopted by them, which were connived at by the Sultan.

In 1873, a mixed party of Dayaks, Tanjongs, and Bukitans from the Rejang river, working produce in the Baram, were attacked by the Kayans. Six were killed and one escaped. The survivor stated that the party had been treacherously attacked; but on the other hand the Kayans asserted that the behaviour of the strangers had been so suspicious that they had satisfied themselves that they were a head-hunting party. The Rajah complained and demanded redress. The Sultan sent an agent in his small steamer to impose a fine, which in itself was excessive. The agent proceeded to the house of the chief of the lower Baram Kayans, although these people had nothing to do with the killing of the subjects of the Rajah, but it was as far up as he dared to venture, and levied the fine upon them, demanding double the amount he had been instructed to impose, the difference, of course, to go into his own pocket. The Rajah had fixed the fine, but the Sultan had put on his price as well, so that he might have his pickings out of the affair, and now his agent doubled that sum. It was in vain for the chief to protest that neither he nor his people had been concerned in the murders. The Sultan's agent threatened the chief that if he did not pay, the Rajah would send several men-of-war, that others would be despatched from Labuan, and more from Bruni, and that all their country would be laid waste and their villages burned. After a stormy interview, the chief succeeded in beating the agent down to a fine amounting to $8000, just thirty times more than the amount demanded by the Rajah as compensation to the relatives of those killed. And this fine the chief was constrained to pay.

Upon the death of the Sultana, a commissioner was sent to Baram by the Sultan to demand the customary aid towards the obsequies. A meeting of all the chiefs was summoned by the commissioner, a haji, and, as it happened, the late Mr. H. Brooke Low, who was then travelling in the Baram, was present. The Sultan's mandate, requiring so much from each man, was read and left with the chiefs,

the haji not for a moment suspecting that any one present could read it. Mr. Low, however, was able to do so, and when it was shown to him he was shocked, though not surprised, to discover that the haji had read into the mandate a requirement for amounts more than double that demanded.

But the rebellion of the Kayans and the expulsion of the Brunis from Baram ensued in the middle of 1874; the river was freed of its oppressors, and the victorious Kayans menaced every settlement along the coast from the Baram to Bintulu. The villages were deserted and the Sultan was in despair, unable to reduce the Kayans, unable even to protect the Malays. Not only could he draw no revenue thence, but he dare not even ask for it. This prepared the way for the transfer of the whole stretch of coast to Sarawak. So far as the Sultan was concerned he was glad to commute the sovereignty of a district, from which little before the revolt, and nothing after, could be squeezed by himself out of the inhabitants, for a certain sum guaranteed to be paid to himself annually.

To escape Bruni oppression, people were constantly migrating to Sarawak, principally from the Semalajau, Niah, and Miri rivers, and in 1876 over 2000 came in. These poor people had to effect their escape by stealth, and consequently had to abandon all their property. Shortly after this upwards of 500 families of Kenyahs moved over into the Bintulu.

In accordance with the treaty with Great Britain of 1847 the Sultan was debarred from ceding any territory to any foreign power without the sanction of her Majesty's Government. This gave the British Government the right, or rather the power, to prevent Sarawak acquiring the Baram, and this it was prepared to do. As usual it proved obstructive, and refused to sanction the transfer; it went so far as to express its unwillingness to allow any territorial change to be made on the coast of Bruni. This was insisted on again in 1876, though the Rajah wrote to the Secretary for Foreign Affairs (March 20) "I may candidly state that a most pernicious system of robbery and oppression is pursued

by the hirelings of the Bruni Government. It surely can scarcely be conceived by her Majesty's Government that upholding the authority of the Bruni Government is tantamount to supporting the cause of oppression and misrule."

Her Majesty's Government had refused to interfere in any way with that of Bruni for the amelioration of the condition of the people, and the maintenance of open ports and free trade; had stood aloof as not disposed to interfere in the internal affairs of the Sultanate, and yet now, most inconsistently, it stepped in to forbid the cession to Sarawak of a portion of that miserably misgoverned and depopulated State.

The fact seems to have been that the Foreign Office had been persistently misinformed as to the position and prospects of Sarawak, and as to the conduct of the Rajah towards the Sultan. The latter had agreed to the cession of Baram to Sarawak; he desired it for monetary reasons, the only reasons that appealed to or swayed him. But when Sir Edward Hertslet informed Mr. H. T. Ussher, C.M.G., who was Governor of Labuan from 1875 to 1879, and who appreciated the motives which guided the Rajah, that he "in common with others at the Foreign Office had fancied that the acquisition of the Baram by Sarawak would lead to the loss of its sago trade with Labuan," the cat was out of the bag. Incidently we may remark that Baram exported no sago, and that there could then have been little or no trade between that river and Labuan, for during the first six months of Sarawak rule the exports amounted in value to $9000 only. It was a dog-in-the-manger policy, what Labuan could not have, that it was resolved Sarawak should not have, and the interests of the people were left out of the question. It is possible enough that this was inspired by jealousy. No man likes to see his own field sterile and that of his neighbour producing luxurious crops. Conceive the feelings of a small mercer in the same street as a Whiteley or Harrod, who finds his own business dwindling, and is oppressed by the extension and success of the great firm a few doors off.

Such may have been the feeling of a Governor of Labuan.

The Rajah visited England in 1874, and on July 16 handed in a memorandum to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, pointing out that the appropriation by foreign powers of north-west and north-east Borneo and the Sulu Archipelago[1] should be guarded against, and recommended to ensure this, and for the benefit of trade and of the native communities, that Great Britain should assume the sovereign power over those territories that remained to the Sultanate of Bruni, that the Sultan and his heirs should be pensioned, as well as the five principal Bruni Rajahs; and that a town should be built at the mouth of the Bruni river, which should become the headquarters of her Majesty's Representative, in place of Labuan. All that the Rajah asked for Sarawak was that Baram should be incorporated with that State, owing to the fact that the inland population of that river and that of the Rejang were greatly intermixed, and should therefore be under one head and government.

A policy somewhat similar to that above indicated was, a year after, inaugurated with great success in the Malay Peninsula, and it would doubtless have met with equal success in Borneo had it found favour with her Majesty's Ministers then, though thirty years afterwards they saw reason to adopt it, but only after Bruni had become a bankrupt State, stripped of most of its territories, and with its small remaining revenue pawned. At the time when the Rajah made his proposal, the whole of what is now the British North Borneo Company's territory, together with Lawas, Trusan, Limbang, and Bruni, might have been acquired, and the Sultan would then have become as powerless to do harm as one of the native princes of the Federated Malay States, thus relieving the people of the

[1] It will be remembered that in 1849 the late Rajah, as her Majesty's Commissioner, had concluded a treaty with the Sultan of Sulu, but this had to be ratified within two years. The British Government, however, would not place a man-of-war at the Rajah's disposal, and he was unable to proceed to Sulu to effect this necessary ratification. The Spaniards, by force of arms, enforced another treaty upon Sulu, and before those two years had expired. But the British Government took no interest in Sulu, and this was allowed to pass unheeded.

intolerable oppression of a government which had reduced the population to a small remnant of what it had been formerly.

The policy adopted in regard to the native States of the Malay Peninsula in 1875, referred to above, is generally known as that of Sir Andrew Clarke, who was Governor of the Straits Settlements from 1873 to 1875. It was the policy, however, that the late Rajah, many years before, had advocated as one which should be introduced into all native States, and he then wrote: "The experiment of developing a country through the residence of a few Europeans and by the assistance of its own native rulers has never been fully tried, and it appears to me, in some respects more desirable than the actual possession of a foreign nation; for if successful, the native prince finds greater advantages, and if a failure, the European government is not committed. Above all it insures the independence of the native princes, and may advance the inhabitants further in the scale of civilisation by means of this very independence, than can be done when the government is a foreign one, and their freedom sacrificed."

Compare this with the remark made by Sir Andrew Clarke in his speech before the Legislative Council of Singapore on the government of the native States: "We should continue a policy not of aggression upon our neighbours, but of exercising our own influence, and by giving them officers to help them."

Had the late Rajah's policy been adopted, Sumatra, or that part of it which had not been relinquished to the Dutch in 1824, might now contain many States as flourishing as those of the Malay Peninsula. On March 3, 1844, the Rajah wrote: "I was glad of the opportunity I had of seeing the political state of Achin, as it fully confirmed my views, which I made known to Sir ——, of the steps necessary to protect and enlarge our commerce. Achin, like Borneo, is now in such a state of distraction that no protection can be found for life or property. To protect our trade we must *make a monarch*, and uphold him; and he would be a British servant *de facto*. We could always

raise the better and depress the worse, in other words support those who will benefit ourselves."

A policy that both the Rajahs had advocated should be adopted towards Bruni.

For many years, as we have seen, Sarawak had to contend with the opposing influence of Governors of Labuan adverse to her advancement, but in 1875 Mr. Ussher was appointed Governor, and he was not prepared to take for granted all the stories of Sarawak aggression and intimidation which were poured into his ears. He sought for independent testimony, inquired into matters himself, and was not disposed to gloss over the misdeeds of the Sultan and his pangirans, and to suppress all mention of these in his despatches home.

Towards the end of his term of office Mr. Ussher wrote to the Rajah, "I have had an important interview to-day with Mr. Meade at the Colonial Office. The object in view was to ascertain the advisability of permitting you to acquire Baram. I ascertained that the objections against this step were reduced, firstly, to an idea that undue pressure was put upon the Sultan; secondly, that resident (!) traders, British, in that river would be damaged thereby.

"I also ascertained that the Colonial Secretary here was not at all disposed to carry out the views obstructive of Sarawak advance, which have animated his predecessors; but that, on the contrary, he was disposed to allow you and the Sultan to arrive at your own terms, so long as the Sultan was a perfectly free agent in the matter.

"In the course of a rather lengthy, and, I trust, not ineffective address on my part, I successfully combated these trivial and groundless objections, and exposed the fallacy of Sir Henry Bulwer's[1] and Mr. Pope Hennessy's views with regard to your dealings with the Sultan. I pointed out also the gross injustice and oppression of the Bruni rule in these territories, and expressed my firm conviction of the general desire on the part of the industrious and agricultural classes to pass under your settled and civilised rule. I demonstrated that there were *no* resident

[1] He had succeeded Mr. Pope Hennessy, and was Mr. Ussher's predecessor.

British traders, either in Baram or elsewhere in these parts, whose interests could be imperilled. Further, that so long as you impose no restrictive export duties on native produce from the river, there was nothing whatever to prevent the sago, etc., coming to Labuan or anywhere else.

"I admitted that I had at first been disposed to adopt the Sultan's view with regard to your relations with him generally, but that careful inquiry and matured experience had proved to me, not only the untruth of the accusations of intimidation brought against you, but also the advisability of permitting you to extend your rule by all legitimate means, instead of supporting from quixotic and mistaken motives the effete and immoral rule of Bruni. Mr. Meade finally suggested to me, that the question might be settled by allowing you to make your own terms with the Sultan, with the proviso, that any agreement or treaty made between the two should be subject to the ratification of her Majesty's Government, who would thus have it in their power to nullify any injustice either to Bruni or British interests.

"From Sir M. Beach's views, and from Mr. Meade's proposal, I argue that the matter lies now at last in your own hands, as Lord Salisbury is likely to accept the Colonial Office views in these comparatively small matters, on account of its necessarily more detailed and minute experience of the interests of Borneo generally.

"On the whole I think we may congratulate ourselves on the prospect of a satisfactory solution of this unpleasant affair. You may always, as you know, depend upon me never to allow an opportunity to pass of helping you and Sarawak generally. Apart from our personal friendship, I act on the conviction that Sarawak is the future regenerator of Borneo."

This was in January, 1879, but Government officials move slowly, and in a mysterious way, and it was not till late in 1882 that the Foreign Office sanctioned the annexation of Baram by Sarawak. Thus, at length, after negotiating a transfer with the Sultan in 1874, the obstruction of the British Government was overcome, but it took eight years to do this.

A new spirit had come over the Governors of Labuan, and the somewhat ignoble spite, bred partly of ignorance and partly of jealousy, which had characterised their conduct with regard to Sarawak, and the Rajah in particular, was exchanged at last for generous and honest recognition of the excellence of his rule, and of the injustice of forcing the natives against their will to remain under the cruel oppression of this Old Man of the Sea astride on their shoulders.

The subsequent administrators of Labuan were favourable to Sarawak, but in 1889 the Colony was handed over to the British North Borneo Company. Their officials had no authority outside of Labuan and did not correspond with the Foreign Office, and Consuls were appointed to Bruni.

In June, 1883, the Rajah visited Bruni, and was received by the aged Sultan with special marks of distinction. The Sultan waited at the entrance of the audience chamber, and taking the Rajah by the hand, led him to the throne where he seated him by his side. Negotiations for the cession of Baram and the rivers and districts lying between that river and Bintulu were at once entered upon, and speedily concluded, and on the 13th, the deed of cession was finally sealed and delivered.

The cession of this district gave great satisfaction to the inhabitants, and most of those who had migrated to Sarawak returned by degrees. A fort was erected at Claudetown [1] (Merudi) about sixty miles up the Baram river, and here Chinese and Malay traders soon settled, and a brisk trade rapidly sprang up. Minor stations were also established at Miri and Niah. The turbulent Kayans and Kenyahs speedily became pacified, and existing feuds were settled. Now, this district is one of the most peaceful and prosperous in the State.[2] The entrance to the river is, and has been, a great hindrance to trade, the bar being very shallow and

[1] Named after the late Mr. C. A. C. de Crespigny.

[2] In a great degree due to the able administration of Mr. Charles Hose, D.Sc., who served in this district for twenty years, during sixteen of which he was Resident in charge. In 1904 he became Divisional Resident of the 3rd Division; he retired in 1907.

exposed, so that it is unsafe for sailing vessels and screw steamers. The Government accordingly had a special steamer of 200 tons built in England to carry the trade. She is practically flat-bottomed, and is propelled by paddles. Another, larger, was added as the trade increased. In January, 1884, the Rajah was notified by Earl Granville that her Majesty's Government had no objection to the exercise of jurisdiction over British subjects by the judicial authorities of the Government of Sarawak in this newly-acquired territory.

Only one chief in Baram gave any trouble; and he was Aban Jau, chief of the Tinjar Kayans. He persistently interfered, and thwarted the policy of Government as much as he could without bringing himself into open conflict with the authorities. He maintained a position of semi-independence, and flew his own flag. But in May, 1884, he committed an intolerable act, and had to be humbled. As the affair is illustrative of the iniquities allowed at Bruni until quite recently, the particulars may be given. To appease the manes of his daughter-in-law, Aban Jau sent to Pangiran Nipa of Tutong, asking for a slave, so that he might immolate the unhappy wretch. His messengers went to Bruni, where two pangirans, Matusin and Tejudin, handed them a slave, an old and decrepit man, whom they sent as a present to Aban Jau. The Resident at Claudetown, hearing of this, had the party intercepted and arrested, but too late to save the slave. He had been killed and his head taken, as he was too old to walk, and the messengers did not care to trouble themselves to carry him. Aban Jau was severely punished; he submitted, and his power was broken. He was no better than an aged savage, and there was some excuse for him, as he was complying with ancestral customs; but there was none for the Muhammadan Bruni pangirans for despatching a miserable old slave to a death by torture.

In June, 1884, by the Sultan's orders, a Dusun village was attacked—the time for the attack being chosen when nearly all the able-bodied men were absent, and over twenty women and children were killed. Oppression

became so rife that many refugees crossed the frontier into Sarawak territory, abandoning in so doing their property and plantations. In August of the same year, the people of Limbang broke out into open rebellion.

The Limbang river waters a wide district that is fertile and populous. The people possessed extensive sago plantations, and were comparatively prosperous. On this account they were all the more oppressed by the pangirans. There was no protection for person and property, and women and girls were carried off to fill the harems of Bruni. This was the people that suffered such cruel wrongs at the hands of the Pangiran Makota, and it was in this river that he met his death in 1860.

The trouble began with two of the agents of the Pangiran Temanggong, the then Regent and heir apparent, being killed whilst extorting taxes. The pangiran thereupon went up in his steam-launch with a large following, and proposed that the chiefs should meet him at a certain place and discuss matters. The proposal was made in guile, his real purpose being to seize the opportunity for slaughtering them. But these people had had many years' experience of pangirans and their little ways, and met guile with guile. The proposal was acceded to, but whilst the pangiran was on his way to the appointed rendezvous he himself fell into an ambuscade.

Fire was opened on his party, and he was forced to beat a retreat, his launch damaged, seventeen of his men killed, and more wounded. Bruni was thrown into panic, and stockades were erected to resist an expected invasion. The Limbang people followed up their advantage by raiding the suburbs of the town, and a house was attacked within half a mile of the Sultan's palace.

The Sultan, then in his dotage, was helpless, and appealed to the acting Consul-General, Mr. Treacher (now Sir William Treacher, K.C.M.G.), to help him out of his difficulties. Mr. Treacher knew that the Limbangs had been driven to rebellion by the intolerable exactions to which they had been subjected, and he declined to interfere, unless the Sultan and his wazirs should concede a charter releasing

the Limbangs from all arbitrarily imposed taxes, and limiting taxation to a small poll tax, and a 5 per cent *ad valorem* duty on gutta percha, granting them at the same time immunity for their property and sago-plantations, and engaging that no more tax-collectors should be sent from Bruni to the river, and that a general amnesty should be accorded.

This charter, embodying so many radical reforms, was granted with ill-concealed reluctance, and without the slightest intent of performance.

Armed with this document, Mr. Treacher proceeded to the Limbang. But already the Sultan had sent word to the Muruts to fall on the Limbangs and kill and pillage as they liked.

Whilst Mr. Treacher was negotiating with the chiefs, news arrived that these savages had murdered four Kadayan women and two men, and they were consequently ill-disposed to accept the charter. They knew by experience that they could not rely upon the good faith of the Sultan and his wazirs. However, Mr. Treacher was urgent, and hesitatingly they appended their marks to the document; relying rather on the white man to see that its provisions were carried out, than feeling that any confidence could be placed in the word of the Sultan.

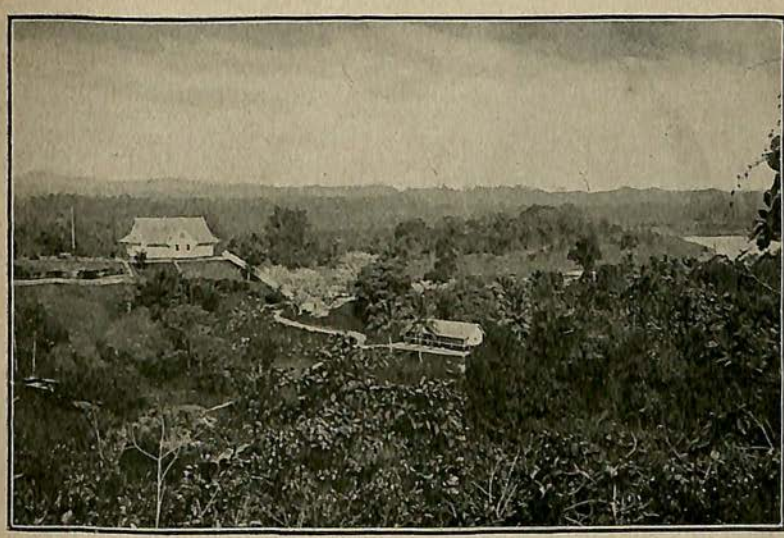
And in fact, no sooner was the agreement signed, than the Sultan sent his emissaries into the Baram district to invite the Kayans to raid the Limbang, but the Sarawak Government got wind of this, and at once took prompt and effective measures to prevent the tribes on the Baram from answering the appeal.

In December, 1884, Mr. Frank R. O. Maxwell,[1] who was administering the Government in the absence of the Rajah, when at Bruni heard that sixteen Sarawak Dayaks and four Malays had been killed while collecting produce in the neighbouring river, Trusan. The Sultan in his impotence to act, suggested to Mr. Maxwell his willingness to cede the Trusan district to Sarawak. The feudal rights over this district were held by the Pangiran Temanggong,

[1] Joined 1872; was Assistant Resident, and Resident of Batang Lupar and Saribas, and in 1881 became Divisional Resident of Sarawak proper. He retired in 1895, and died in 1897.

and he too consented. Bruni and Sarawak, he said, were the same country, and in transferring his rights to Sarawak he would be incorporating himself in the Sarawak Government. Subject to the approval of the Rajah, Mr. Maxwell accepted this offer of the Trusan.

The Sultan, the Pangiran Temanggong, and other wazirs and pangirans were then all in favour of the cession of the Limbang, as well as the Trusan, to Sarawak. The



TRUSAN FORT.

Chinese and Malay traders and the lower classes strongly advocated the transfer; and the Regent and the wazir next to him in rank gave Mr. Maxwell a written promise with their seals attached that, pending the return of the Rajah, Limbang should not be transferred to any foreign government. On the return of the Rajah early in 1885, Trusan was occupied, and a fort and station established some thirty miles from the mouth, to which English and native officers were appointed. The Muruts up the river were a quarrelsome people, and blood-feuds were common, and gave some trouble at first. The people generally had become miserably poor through a long course of oppression.

Trusan is a good example of what tact and discretion

can do in dealing with natives, and the Muruts were the most savage of those in that part. In a very few years they became peaceful, well-to-do, and contented, enjoying the fruits of their labours in security. Trusan has now a fairly flourishing trade, and the rich plains through which the river winds, and which in days gone by had been extensively cultivated with rice, but which had been rendered desolate by extortion, now afford large grazing grounds for herds of water-buffaloes, which are bred for export, and also excellent land for the cultivation of the sago palm.

Barely a month had elapsed since the peace had been patched up with the Limbang people by the acting Consul-General, before the people were again in revolt, and many Bruni Malays, men and women, were killed, large numbers of buffaloes were mutilated, and again the capital, Bruni, was menaced. Nothing further was done by the British Government, and nothing could be done, except to establish a firm government in the disaffected region, and the Foreign Office was not prepared to do this. As for the authorities in Bruni, they were incapable of doing anything. Their only idea of keeping rebellious subjects under control was to invoke the aid of wild interior tribes, and invite them to butcher and plunder all who resisted their exactions, and this they could no longer do.

On May 30, 1885, the old Sultan Mumin departed this life, at the venerable age of over one hundred years, and the Pangiran Temanggong Hasim, reputed son of the late Sultan Omar Ali,[1] the predecessor of Sultan Mumin, was elevated to the throne. Sultan Hasim, who was past middle age when he succeeded, was a shrewd man, though hard and vindictive. His antecedents had not been exemplary, but hopes were entertained that, being a man of strength of mind and of advanced ideas, an improvement would be effected in the administration of Bruni, which would lead to the establishment of good order and bring the place and State out of absolute decay into comparative prosperity, but these hopes, strong man as he was, he was powerless to fulfil.

[1] See footnote, p. 69.

In order to appreciate much that occurred during the reign of Sultan Hasim it is necessary to understand the conditions under which he became Sultan, and the effect that these conditions had upon his power and position.

His predecessor, Mumin, had an only son, the Pangiran Muda Muhammad Tejudin, a semi-imbecile, nicknamed Binjai, literally the son of misfortune, signifying an idiot. Much as Sultan Mumin would have liked to have proclaimed his son heir to the throne, it was quite impossible for him to do so in opposition to the natural objections of the nobles, upheld, as these were, by the laws of Bruni, which preclude the accession of any prince afflicted with mental or bodily infirmity. The succession would therefore fall upon either of the Sultan's nephews, the Pangiran Bandahara, or the Pangiran di Gadong, and both claimed it. These two powerful princes and wazirs, with their feudal and official territorial rights, and the many nobles and chiefs who owed them allegiance, represented the most powerful factions in the country, and the accession of either to the throne would have plunged the country into bloodshed. To avert this, the British Government persuaded Sultan Mumin, but not without bringing considerable pressure to bear upon him, to nominate the Pangiran Temanggong Hasim, the senior wazir, as his successor, and to appoint him Regent, the old Sultan being too feeble-minded to govern.

Hasim's elevation to the throne gave profound offence to the Pangirans Bandahara and di Gadong, and to the majority of the people, who believed the story of his mean birth, and that he had no just title to the rank he held as a prince of blood royal. That his accession was not disputed was due only to its implied support of the British Government, though that support would probably have failed him had he been forced to fall back upon it. The Bandahara and di Gadong, though they retained their offices, for many years refused him their support, and would neither attend his Council nor maintain any kind of relation with him, notwithstanding the fact that they were his two principal Ministers of State; and he was powerless to force them to do so, or to deprive them of their offices.

Moreover, his predecessor had left him in sore straits for the means necessary for the support of his government, and even of his household. None of the late Sultan's property came to him, and the whole of the crown-lands in Bruni territory had been illegally granted to others, and these, though his rightful appurtenances, he had no power to recover.

Sultan Hasim thus came to the throne practically shorn of everything that goes to the support of a crown. Abandoned by his ministers, and the loyalty of his people denied him, deprived of his revenues, and with but a few followers, there was nothing left him but the sovereign rights, shadowy in nature since he had not the means fully to exert them. A pathetic picture; but in spite of his faults it says much for his personal ability and strength of character that he was able, not only to maintain his position, but gradually to gain sufficient power to exert his authority, and to make his will felt. It must not be overlooked that many of his worst acts were the direct outcome of his necessitous condition, and the constant intriguing against him by his own ministers.

Owing to lack of power to chastise the rebels, though not of will, Limbang had been let alone by the Sultan, and for some time there were no aggressive acts committed by either side, but in November, 1885, the people of Limbang were again in open rebellion and had killed two more Bruni subjects. The Sultan thereupon sent the Rajah two pressing messages asking him to visit Bruni, and this the Rajah did. The Sultan laid the state of affairs before him, and declared that he saw no hope of peace unless the Rajah would consent to attack the Limbang, and reduce the people to order for him. Limbang was sufficiently near to be a menace to the capital. Twice it had been threatened by them, and the suburbs raided. The third time might be more disastrous. The town might fall into their hands.

The Rajah, however, declined to interfere. The Limbang people were at peace with Sarawak, and numbers of his subjects were working produce in that river, and met with friendliness there. To reduce these people to submission, and then to hand them over to oppression, after having deprived

them of the power to protect themselves, was what the Rajah would never consent to do. That something must be done, and done at once, he felt, but the question of what should be done was for the representative of her Majesty's Government to decide.

As we have before pointed out, in the Sultanate of Bruni, there are various rights claimed. The Sultan has his rights, some districts revert to the holders of certain offices, and others are under the hereditary feudal rule of the pangirans. Limbang pertained to this last category. The Sultan was sovereign, but his sovereign rights consisted in this alone, namely, to send his agents into the country and squeeze it. The feudal lords were the pangirans, and as they could not oppress the exasperated and revolted people any more, they were ready to surrender their rights to the Rajah, but could not do this without the Sultan's confirmation and seal. What the Sultan wanted was that the Rajah should crush the rebellion, so that he might work his vengeance on the Limbang people, and turn the screw on them till nothing more could be extracted from them. This the Rajah perfectly understood, and he declined to do the dirty work for the Sultan. The refusal of assistance by the Rajah produced a coolness on the part of the Sultan. He would not, however, receive this refusal as final, and he repeated his request to the Rajah in an altered form; he requested him to place the gunboat *Aline* with a strong force of Sarawak Dayaks, also a large sum of money, at his (the Sultan's) disposal, for the purpose of enabling him to reduce the Limbang people under his own officers, if the Rajah himself would not head the expedition.

The Rajah's refusal aroused an angry feeling in the breast of Hasim, and this was fanned to bitter hostility, when the Consul-General informed him and the Limbang people simultaneously, in reply to a petition of the latter that they might be placed under the rule of white men, that her Majesty's Government was prepared to consent to the transfer of Limbang to Sarawak. The Sultan's hostile attitude was not shared by his ministers, or by the Bruni people generally, or even by the hereditary owners or rulers of the Limbang.

These latter, as has been shown, unable to extract more taxes from the people, hoped to receive from the Sarawak Government an annual stipulated income in lieu of precarious and uncertain exactions. They accordingly begged the Rajah to take over the river. But the Sultan refused to consent, and his refusal was probably actuated even then by motives other than those of revenge and resentment as the sequel will show.

In September, 1886, two cold-blooded murders were committed in the Tutong, within a day's journey overland from Bruni. Two young pangirans, a man and a woman, had been living together without the sanction of their respective parents. The girl, after a while, was ordered by her father, Pangiran Nipa, to return to him. She did so, and he then put her to death with his own hands. The young man, Pangiran Japar, was brother to Pangiran Mat, who had been placed in charge of Tutong by the Pangiran di Gadong, the ex-officio holder of feudal rights in that district. Japar and Mat were both subjects of Sarawak. A short time after the murder of the girl, Nipa's brother, the Pangiran Tejudin, son-in-law of the Sultan, and uncle of the unfortunate girl, sent an armed party to Pangiran Mat, to inform him that a mandate had been issued by the Sultan for the execution of Japar. Pangiran Mat did not ask to be shown this mandate, and in fact Tejudin had none, but was intimidated into allowing his brother to be killed.

The Rajah was at the time at Bruni, and he at once demanded of the Sultan that a fair trial of Pangiran Tejudin should be held. There was very little doubt that the Sultan's name had been misused, and Japar was a Sarawak subject. As no justice was likely to be obtained in Bruni, the Rajah further demanded that the murderer should be handcuffed and sent to Labuan for trial, when the truth would come out. But this was refused. The Sultan naturally was determined to screen his son-in-law, who had instigated the murder, and who was then in the palace enjoying his protection. The Rajah indignantly declined to meet the Sultan so long as the murderer was sheltered under his roof. So the matter ended, but it widened the rift between the Rajah and the Sultan.

In June, 1887, Sir Frederick Weld, Governor of Singapore, went to Bruni to settle a dispute between the North Borneo Company and the Sultan over a debateable strip of land. Sultan Hasim seized the occasion to pour into the ear of Sir Frederick a tissue of accusations against Sarawak, and no Sarawak official was allowed to be present to refute them. The Government of the Rajah was charged with disturbing the peace, and with sending its emissaries into the Limbang to foster discontent, and to keep the rebellion simmering, in the hopes of being able to find an excuse for annexing the district. Sir Frederick listened, but apparently believed little he heard, for he recommended the Sultan to hand over the Limbang to the Rajah. He further strongly urged the Sultan to accept a British Protectorate over his remaining dominions, and to receive a Resident, who might act as adviser in the administration of the State. The Sultan consented to this latter recommendation; his intention, however, to accept a British Resident at Bruni, to prevent his misrule, and to curb the tyranny of his adherents, was only pretence. Sir Frederick Weld was perhaps acting beyond his instructions in proposing the appointment of a Resident, but the proposal was sound. In September, 1888, the late Sir Hugh Low, then Resident of Perak, was despatched to Bruni to conclude an agreement with the Sultan by which Bruni became a Protectorate.

In the Federated Malay States, as in the Indian Protectorates, British Residents are placed who can advise as to the conduct of government, and it is perfectly understood by the native rulers that their advice must be followed. Now, a British Protectorate had been extended over Bruni, and as a consequence a Resident should have been placed there to control the Sultan and check the misdoings of his chiefs. But nothing of the sort was done. The Limbang was left in a condition of disorder, and a menace to its neighbours, and the Brunis to the arbitrary injustice and cruelty of their rulers. Trusan now offered a near haven of refuge to which many fled, both slaves and free-born people, the latter chiefly to save their daughters from a fate worse than slavery — a short period in a harem, and then

domestic drudgery for life. The British Government would do nothing, and looked very much as if it were not disposed to allow any one else to do anything. Sir Hugh Low,[1] who had an exceptional experience of Bruni and the people, had urged the Sultan to place the Limbang under the Rajah, tendering the same advice as had Sir Frederick Weld; but to this, also, Hasim turned a deaf ear.

The Limbang chiefs, after having maintained their independence for six years, early in 1890 decided to settle the question of their future for themselves. They assembled, and of their own free will and accord placed their country under the protection of Sarawak, and themselves under the authority of its Government; in token of which they hoisted the Sarawak flag. In justice to the claims of the inhabitants, and in conformity with a promise he had made to them to tender such assistance as lay in his power, the Rajah accepted the responsibility thus placed upon him, and annexed the country on March 17, subject to the approval of her Majesty's Government.

The Rajah had already frequently approached the Sultan on behalf of these unfortunate people to urge that justice should be done to them, and that they should not be given over to be preyed upon by rapacious pangirans. The Pangiran Muda, son of the late Rajah Muda Hasim, who by birth was the nearest to the throne, and who possessed feudal rights over a part of the Limbang, having abandoned all hope of being able to exercise those rights and draw any revenue from the district, ascended the river and openly proclaimed to his people that he had handed over all his rights to the Rajah. The other hereditary holders of feudal authority in the district had again approached the Rajah, and had entreated him to annex Limbang, which had become not only unprofitable to them, but a menace to Bruni. The Rajah would have been untrue to his word passed to the Limbang chiefs had he left them to their fate, after the failure of his negotiations and repeated attempts to intercede for them with the

[1] Sir Hugh Low, G.C.M.G., who was then British Resident of Perak, had for many years been Colonial Secretary at Labuan.

Sultan. Although he was averse to taking this step, yet he felt that it was not possible for him to refuse the appeals that came to him from all sides to interfere, and it was the only solution of the difficulty, failing the appointment of a British Resident, for the people could not be expected to again place themselves under the power of a Sultan who would keep no promises, and who intended no mercy.

The Sultan, however, mortified in his pride, and being thus prevented from giving vent to his vindictive feeling, had remained obdurate. For some time he had been accumulating arms and ammunition at Bruni for a great attempt upon the Limbang, whilst through his minister, the di Gadong, he was keeping up a pretence of peace. If he succeeded, the horrors that would have ensued in the Limbang may well be conceived; but if he failed, he would draw on Bruni hordes of desperate savages, infuriated by years of ill-treatment, and the Brunis feared that the capture of their town and a general massacre would be the result.

These were the reasons that led the Rajah to act promptly, and to appeal to her Majesty's Government to sanction such action. The Foreign Office approved, after having kept the Rajah in anxious suspense for a year, and fixed the annual sum to be paid by the Sarawak Government for the Limbang at $6000, but failing the Sultan's acceptance of this for three consecutive years, this indemnity would be forfeited.

The Sultan declined to receive this compensation, not, however, so much as a protest against the action of the Rajah, —a purpose with which he has generally been accredited, with not a little misplaced sympathy,—but mainly to punish his recalcitrant ministers, the Pangirans Bandahara and di Gadong. Hitherto he had been quite powerless to do this, but an opportunity was now afforded him, and he did not hesitate to avail himself of it. The two pangirans were the principal holders of the feudal rights over the Limbang, which of late years had yielded them nothing, and they naturally desired, badly off as they were, that the Sultan should sanction the acceptance of the indemnity, the greater part of which would have reverted to them, and

would have afforded them a fixed and ensured revenue, even more than they had ever been able to extort from the people. The remainder would have gone to the Pangiran Muda, and not a cent of it would have gone to the Sultan. But by the laws of Bruni, feudal rights cannot be alienated without the sanction of the Sultan; and he subsequently informed the British Consul that he had withheld his sanction, and would do so as long as he lived, a determination to which he vindictively adhered, solely that he might deprive his two ministers of the revenues to which they were entitled. He went so far as to tell the Consul that he had no real grievance against the Rajah, but it being necessary to find some plausible pretext for his decision he had invented one, which no one in Bruni could call into question.

Sir Spenser St. John, writing privately to the Rajah at this time said, "If the Foreign Office could understand how the Bruni Rajahs govern Limbang, they would make no objection to your taking it over. It is a most interesting river, and when no longer harassed by Kayan raids[1] and plundered by Bruni Rajahs, it will be one of the richest on the coast. Sago can be planted to any extent, and it used to be famous for its pepper gardens. In fact Chinese were working there nearly to the foot of Mulu mountain"—over one hundred miles from the coast.

But in his life of *Rajah Brooke* published in 1899, Sir Spenser St. John alters his tone. He remarks that "unless we are to adopt the principle that 'the end justifies the means,' it is difficult to approve the action of Sarawak in seizing by force any part of the Sultan's dominions. A little gentle, persevering diplomacy would have secured Limbang without violating any principle of international law. I am convinced, however, that the present Rajah was deceived by some one as to the political position of that district, as he wrote that, for four years previous to his action, Limbang was completely independent of the Sultan, which his officers subsequently found was not the case."

As to the first part of this statement, Sir Spenser when

[1] These had long ceased.

he wrote it, had severed his connexion with Borneo for nearly forty years, and it shows how little he was kept in touch with Bornean affairs since he left; or does Sir Spenser imagine that he would have succeeded where such men as the Rajah and Sir Hugh Low had failed; both of whom had continually urged reforms on the Sultan, to which he had turned a deaf ear?

With regard to the second part of the statement, the Rajah certainly did not place himself in a position in which he could be deceived. He conducted all negotiations and all inquiries himself, and on the spot. He was no more deceived as to the true state of affairs than were Sir William Treacher, Dr. Leys (Consul-General), Sir F. Weld, and Sir Hugh Low. It is, moreover, not correct that the Rajah's officers subsequently made the great discovery that is attributed to them. Sir Spenser might well have been a little more explicit as to this last remark. He agrees, however, that there can be no doubt that the inhabitants of Limbang rejoiced to be placed under the Sarawak flag.

"I knew them well, and how they suffered from the exactions of the Pangirans, and their rapacious followers, and no one would have more rejoiced than myself to hear that they had been put under Sarawak rule in a less forcible way. As poverty increased in Bruni, so had the exactions augmented, and Limbang, being near, suffered the most. Perhaps some of my readers may think that in this case the 'end *did* justify the means.' At all events, that appears to have been the view taken by the Foreign Office."

Sir Spenser might very well have accepted the view taken by the Foreign Office, under which he has served with distinction for many years. The Foreign Office judged upon facts that were placed before it, and these facts Sir Spenser had not under his eye when basing this unfair criticism upon the Rajah's proceedings.

The Limbang having been annexed in 1890, a Government station was established some fifteen miles from the river's mouth, and settlers, both Malay and Chinese, soon arrived, and took up their quarters there; indeed, a good

many quitted Bruni, and applied for sites upon which to build shops and houses directly the flag was raised.

The station is now a flourishing little place, and has been well laid out by Mr. O. F. Ricketts,[1] who has been Resident there since its establishment. It is the prettiest out-station in Sarawak; has miles of good riding roads, a bazaar that is well attended; and, being another refuge for the oppressed, the Malay population is continually increasing. Mr. Ricketts, who also has over-charge of the Trusan and Lawas districts, has been eminently successful in his management of the Muruts and Bisayas, of whom he has had some twenty years' experience, and is popular with all classes at Bruni.

In reporting on Limbang in February, 1891, Mr. Ricketts observes: "since the occupation of the river in March last, matters have progressed satisfactorily, and the inhabitants have shown themselves well disposed and satisfied with the new order of things, with the exception of three or four of the Danau chiefs, who have been incited to be otherwise from Bruni.

"Little has been done with the exception of visiting the people, who at all times have been allowed to trade freely with Bruni; no import or export duties have been collected. A number of Brunis have come into the river at different times to wash sago, who previously were unable to do so, owing to the unsettled state of the place.

"Most of the principal Chinese of Bruni have been over here at different times, and have expressed their wish to commence business here. One firm already holds one of the shops, of which there are six, the others being held by Sarawak and Labuan Chinese; one sago factory is in course of erection.

"There has been no revenue for the year; the expenditure amounting to $11,812. No revenue was demanded, until the natives settled down, and had recovered from their previous unsettled state. The expenditure was chiefly in public buildings, bungalows, court

[1] Mr. Ricketts, who is a son of the first British Consul to Sarawak, joined in 1881.

house, barracks, etc." The imports and exports in 1906 amounted to $282,277, against only $86,687 in 1891.

There is no fort at Limbang.

If the reader will look at the map he will see that a peninsula or horn runs out from Bruni, sheltering the bay against the winds and waves from the north-west. Labuan is actually a continuation of the same, but the belt of land has been broken through, leaving only Labuan and a few little islands rising above the surface of the ocean. At the extreme point of the promontory is a lighthouse erected by the Rajah. This promontory goes by the name of Muara. The coal-beds that come to the surface in Labuan, continue in Muara, and Mr. W. C. Cowie[1] had obtained from the Sultan Mumin a concession of the coal-fields in Muara, and all rights over this district were ceded to him in perpetuity by the late Sultan in 1887. These rights confer complete and absolute possession of all the lands in the district, with power to sell, impose taxes, rents, and assessments, the possession of the revenue farms, with power to create new farms of any description, and certain judicial rights conjoined with power to inflict penalties.

This Muara district, the town in which was founded by Mr. Cowie, and named by him Brooketon in honour of the Rajah, is the richest portion of the small and shrunken territory now remaining to the Sultanate of Bruni, and it remains to it, as may be seen, attached by a thread only. It is not large, but it is of much importance, as it possesses a good colliery and an excellent harbour. Previous to the opening of this colliery the population, consisting of a few Kadayan peasants and Malay fishermen, was small and scattered, and, in common with the lower classes throughout the Sultanate, led a miserable existence under misrule.

Mr. Cowie found that a much larger capital was needed to develop the colliery than he possessed, without which the workings would be unremunerative. Every year entailed increasing loss, and in 1888, two years before the acquisition of the Limbang by the Rajah, he sold to him all his rights in Muara.

[1] Now Managing Director of the British North Borneo Company.

Previous to the transfer, for want of capital, the mines had been worked in a hand-to-mouth fashion by a few coolies under a manager with but little experience, the output being confined to meeting the very limited local demand in Labuan. There was practically no plant, and only a small ricketty wharf, to which the surface coal was conveyed in buffalo-drawn waggons over a roughly constructed line.

Those who knew Brooketon in those days and know it now, can testify to the great improvements that have been made by the Rajah's persistent efforts. The greatest possible benefits have been conferred upon the people by the establishment of a large and growing industry among them, but it has been effected at a heavy financial loss. The colliery has been placed under experienced managers; expensive, though necessary, machinery, locomotives, a steam collier, lighters, etc., have been purchased, extensive and solid wharves built, and a new line laid down. The cost of these, with the many other preliminary expenses incidental to the proper working of a large colliery, have been heavy, and so far it has proved an unremunerative speculation. The colliery employs hundreds of miners and workmen, and through it, indirectly, many people gain a livelihood, and the thriving settlement of Brooketon is solely dependent upon it. Law and order have been effectively maintained by the Rajah at his own cost, though in the name and with the consent of the Sultan. Although financial improvement may be remote, closing the mines down would mean a loss of all these benefits to the people; the place would revert to its former condition, and the population would be dispersed. This consideration has induced the Rajah to continue working the colliery, with the hope of ultimately lessening the losses, and the remoter hope of ultimate success. To Brooketon we shall again refer.

In March, 1905, a chief named Lawai, who had been dignified by the Sultan with the title of Orang Kaya Temanggong, with some 400 of his numerous following, removed into the Limbang river from the Baram, in defiance of Government orders. In former days these people had

been the most forward amongst those employed by the Bruni Government to molest the Limbang people, and a short time previous to their removal to the Limbang had killed three Kadayans in Bruni territory, who had incurred displeasure in certain high quarters. After these murders had been committed, Lawai had been favourably received by the Sultan at Bruni, and this no doubt encouraged him openly to resist the Government. A small force was despatched against him, and, taken by surprise, he was captured.

The rendezvous of this expedition was off Muara island, at the entrance to Bruni bay, and, as its object was kept a profound secret, considerable uneasiness arose in the suspicious minds of those at Bruni, who with good reason feared the displeasure of the Rajah. A secret meeting of the leading pangirans and chiefs was held, at which it was decided that should it be the Rajah's intention to sweep away their evil government they would kill the Sultan and hand over the city to him.

With this exception, from the day that the Sarawak flag had been hoisted, there have been no disturbances in the Limbang. But in the neighbouring river, the Trusan, the perpetual petty feuds amongst the Muruts, which led to isolated cases of murder, wounding, and cattle-lifting, caused the Government considerable trouble. In 1900, it became necessary to administer a severe lesson. Some Muruts living in the far interior under their chief, Qkong, aided by those of the Lawas, not then under the Sarawak Government, having killed twenty-one Muruts of the lower Trusan, an expedition, with which the Rajah Muda went, was sent to punish them. This was so effectually done, that it resulted in the people of the interior coming in from all quarters to renounce their feuds; and since that Trusan has also been free from such troubles.

Commenting upon Bornean affairs, the *Singapore Free Press* in August, 1900, remarked that: "Bruni, though independent, is in a state of bankruptcy and decay, and would not be a desirable acquisition for any one. Its revenues, such as they are, are all leased and sold, and

those who should benefit from them have long parted with their interests. The aged Sultan, troubled with debts and worried by creditors, has given powers to the most importunate in their claims, which action has alienated the support of those hereditary chiefs who are entitled to share with him the government of the country. These chiefs assume semi-independence, and each goes his own way unchecked, a method which tends to bring affairs of State to chaos. It is erroneously supposed that the British Government is responsible for this condition of the country. As a matter of fact the British Government has no right, and certainly no inclination, to interfere in the internal affairs of an independent kingdom."

This is a very accurate description of the situation at Bruni; but, unless we accept the theory that might makes right, how can the action of the British Government in appointing a Resident to take charge of Bruni a few years later on be justified? No one, however, can quarrel with the statement that the British Government had no inclination to interfere. That had been made manifest enough by many years of indifference to the sufferings of a people, and of shirking moral responsibilities. It is stretching a point to say that the British Government had no right to interfere; it was their duty to do so, and that duty involved the right. Not content with this neglect of an obvious duty, the Government stood in the people's way, by preventing them from turning to others for the aid they so sorely needed.

What these sufferings were, Mr. Keyser, who was Consul at Bruni, fully sets forth in his report to the Foreign Office for 1899. He wrote: "Such trade as there was has completely fallen off, and the monthly steamer from Singapore has ceased its visits. The debts and difficulties of the Sultan and his chiefs have so increased with time that this state of affairs naturally reacts upon the people. With the exception of catching fish, no one does any work, and all live in poverty and constant want of food. Hundreds of families have left, and continue to leave, to escape the seizure of their women and children by

impecunious head-men, who wish to relieve their own necessities by selling them as slaves.[1] Others are driven from the country by the infliction of fines, and the exorbitant demands of those Chinese and money-lenders to whom the collection of taxes and all saleable rights have been long since transferred for cash. Those traders have full power to oppress the people, and they do so remorselessly. In a short space of time, if the present Government continues, Bruni will be empty of inhabitants."

The two small provinces, the river districts of Tutong and Belait, now remaining to the Sultan, have been in a constant state of revolt. In June, 1899,[2] the people of these rivers openly threw off their allegiance and hoisted the Sarawak flag, an act which caused some excitement in the East, and a good deal of comment in English papers. The principal chiefs then waited upon the Rajah, and begged him to take over their country, a petition that was repeated shortly afterwards. The British Consul was informed by them that they absolutely refused to remain under Bruni rule, and they prayed to be placed under that of Sarawak. But the Consul could only report; and that Government, which had "no right and certainly no inclination to interfere," again proved obstructive, and the people were forced to continue a hopeless effort to gain their liberty.

A desultory war commenced, weak in attack from want of power,[3] and weak in resistance from lack of ammunition and supplies. Treachery was resorted to by those sent to suppress the revolt. As an instance of one cold-blooded deed, Pangiran Tejudin, the Sultan's son-in-law, of whom one infamous act has already been recorded, persuaded the

[1] For this reason a large number of Malays, men, women, and children, in April, 1904, moved into the Limbang. The men were the ironsmiths of Bruni, and this useful class was forced to leave to save their girls. And because some of their women had been seized and sold, the Kadayans of Bruni, who in former days had been the faithful followers of the Sultans and their main support, revolted in 1899.

[2] Two years previously a Sarawak Chinaman was murdered in the Belait, and that this was done at the instigation of an Orang Kaya, solely in the expectation that the murder of a Sarawak subject would lead to such active interference by the Government of that country in the affairs of the district that might end in annexation, was proved in a Court of inquiry held at Claudetown.

[3] Many of the peaceable Kadayans removed into the Limbang, having been driven from their homes, with the loss of all their property, by an emissary of the Sultan, for refusing to join him in an attack on the rebels.

inhabitants of some of the Tutong villages to submit, under a guarantee that their lives and property would be spared. To ratify the terms, the pangiran took twenty-five men from these villages to the Tutong town, and there they were bound and confined. Then one man from each village was selected, placed bound within a fence, and there at intervals slashed at until all had bled to death. Seven only managed to escape.

In October, 1902, many of the inhabitants of Belait and Tutong, unable to continue the struggle, having sought a refuge in the Trusan and Limbang rivers, and the Sultan being wearied into granting an amnesty on the payment of a heavy fine, those remaining surrendered; their principal chiefs, however, the Datus Kalim and De Gadong, with their people, elected to place themselves under Sarawak rule by also moving into the Limbang.

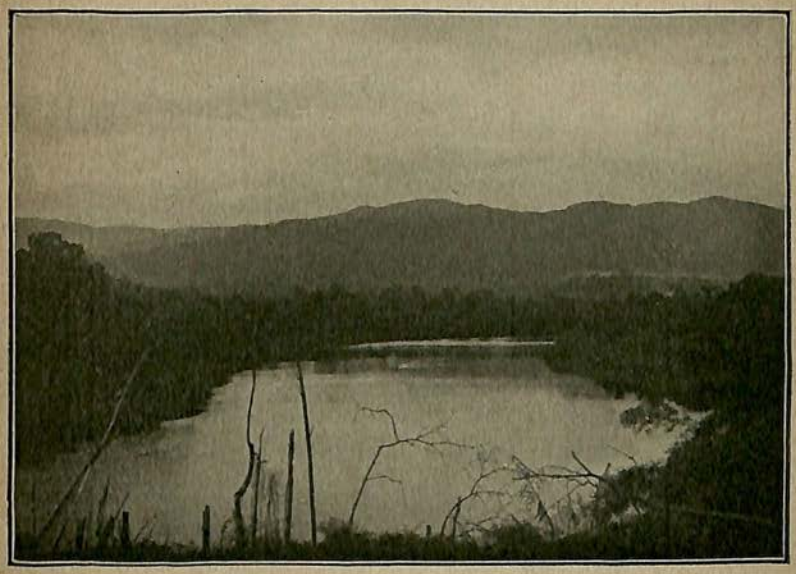
In January, 1905, the British North Borneo Company, with the sanction of her Majesty's Government, transferred their cession of the Lawas river to the Sarawak Government. The inhabitants of this river are closely allied to those of the Trusan, and, in a lesser degree, to those of the Limbang. It is a beautiful and fertile district, but sparsely inhabited.

If the yearly cession money paid upon the districts that have been acquired by Sarawak during the sovereignty of the present Rajah is taken into consideration, not one of these districts has yet paid its way, and even Limbang, upon which no cession money is paid, showed a deficit of expenditure over revenue in 1906, but the increased trade, of these districts, which in 1906 amounted to just a million dollars in value shows them to be in a flourishing state, and this has added to the general prosperity of the raj.

In 1905, an agreement was made between his Majesty's Government and the Sultan, by which the latter accepted a Resident, by whose counsel the affairs of the State were to be guided, and on January 1, 1906, this agreement came into effect, and the Sultan and his wazirs were practically laid aside, the rule becoming British under the *de facto* ruler, the Resident.

The reason given for this step was not so much that the iniquitous conditions of affairs at Bruni could no longer be

tolerated, but that the country was bankrupt, and therefore something had to be done. There were two alternatives presented, the absorption of Bruni by Sarawak, or the introduction of the same system of government that prevails in the Federated Malay States. The latter was adopted as being, in the opinion of the Foreign Office, likely to be more beneficial to the Sultanate, as well as being a healthy example to the neighbouring protectorates, and it has been expressly



ON THE LAWAS RIVER.

stated by the Foreign Secretary that this was done not merely with a view to the future interests of Bruni, but to those of the other British Protectorates in Borneo.[1] The only pretext that has been advanced for not allowing the natural absorption of Bruni by Sarawak was the supposed animosity the Sultan bore towards the Rajah, though, had it still existed, this might well have been regarded only in the light of a compliment to the latter.

But undue importance has been placed upon the ill-feeling the Sultan had formerly borne to the Rajah, and the fact that

[1] Sarawak and British North Borneo.

a complete reconciliation had taken place long before this time appears to have been ignored. Apart from this, however, the likings and dislikings of an isolated, and now defunct, old tyrant were not quite a sufficient basis upon which to establish a policy antagonistic to the natural fate of Bruni and the pronounced wishes of the people. But, many months before it was proposed to establish a British Residency in Bruni, the Sultan, completely at the end of his resources, had confided to the British Consul his unfortunate situation; had expressed his deep regret for the estrangement between himself and the Rajah, and his desire for a reconciliation, which he begged the Consul would bring about, for he had no one else to turn to for the help he so sorely needed, and which he knew the Rajah would not refuse him.

The Rajah, who had never lost his kindly feeling towards the Bruni rulers, at once visited Bruni, and exchanged visits with the Sultan, which were marked by extreme cordiality and confidence on the part of the latter. But by no method short of a clean sweep of its debased Government and corrupt officials, of whom the Sultan was the most corrupt, could any improvement be effected in the sad condition of Bruni, or in the Sultan's miserable plight, and therefore the Rajah, through the British Consul, offered terms for the transfer of Bruni to his Government, and these were far more generous to the Sultan than those which the Foreign Office, with full knowledge of this offer, subsequently forced the Sultan to accept.

The terms offered by the Rajah were placed before the Sultan by the British Consul, and were well received by him and his family, and they were anxious to accept these at once. They were, however, completely in the power of three of the members of Council,—the Juwatan [1] Abu Bakar, Orang Kaya Laksamana, and Orang Kaya di Gadong, who had battened on the Sultan by lending him large sums of money on extortionate interest, and who, seeing their way to further affluence, prevented the Sultan accepting the Rajah's offer until he should have assigned to them all the benefits it would convey to him, when he would have been called upon to accept it for their advantage.

[1] High Chamberlain.

All who have read these pages will agree there can be no possible doubt that the Sultan and his ministers had well deserved to have their powers curtailed, even to the extent of absolute deprivation of all control in the affairs of their country, but not a few will naturally wonder why the Foreign Office had not arrived at such an obvious conclusion many years ago. Then the reasons for interference were tenfold more weighty than now. Successive years have seen the Sultanate stripped of its territories, and the capacity of the Sultan and his bureaucracy to do evil lessened in proportion to the loss of population, revenues, and power. Then the British Government would have become possessed of a large territory, nearly as large as England, with a numerous population, and would have had a reasonable prospect before it of establishing a State or Colony which might at this time be as flourishing as any of those in the Malay peninsula; now they have unnecessarily hampered themselves with a miserable bankrupt remnant of a formerly large State, some 3000 square miles in area only, with a total population of not more than 15,000; with no internal resources to develop, and with revenues so slight as to be inconsiderable, an experiment which appears to be proving costly.

To contend that the governmental system of the Federated Malay States would be a good example to Sarawak is to presume a superiority in that system, and to infer that the conditions prevailing in the former and latter States are on a parity. So far there has been no convincing evidence of the superiority of this system in its application to Bruni, though that is not surprising, as the British Resident can hardly be expected to make bricks without straw; and Sarawak, which has the credit of having "the best form of government for a country populated by an Oriental people of various races," would scarcely be wise to exchange the simple methods that have been gradually built up to meet the requirements of her population for an elaborated system, which, however successful it has been in the States for which it was formed, might not be altogether conformable to existing conditions in Sarawak. There is almost as much difference between the populations of the

Malay States and Sarawak, as there is between that of the latter and Java or Ceylon, and the same difference exists in regard to Bruni. To argue that a form of government, because it is eminently adapted to the circumstance of one country would necessarily be suitable to another, is to be optimistic, and shows a want either of common sense, or of knowledge of the respective conditions of the countries indicated.

Perhaps the mysterious profession of the Foreign Secretary in regard to the future interests of all the British Protectorates in Borneo, which has been noticed, conceals the real motives, yet to be revealed, for this sudden departure, which red tapeism can hardly explain away, and which has given rise to a political position that is peculiar, whether viewed in the light of expediency or as a matter of sheer justice. The professed motives appear to be scarcely logical, for this fresh policy involved no obvious advantages to the Empire, was displeasing to the natives, and unfair to the interests of Sarawak. But, unfortunately, evidence is not wanting that there are other motives, which are not only illogical but unwarrantable, and it is only by keeping these in view that the policy of the British Government becomes intelligible. It is a policy that has not originated at the Foreign or the Colonial Office, but has been adopted by both "on advice given with entire knowledge of place and people"—how, when, and by whom acquired, it would be interesting to learn.

Whether Bruni was governed from Singapore or absorbed by Sarawak was a question of little importance to the public, and should have been one of minor importance to the Foreign Office, for either way its position as a British Protectorate would remain unaffected. No one can assert that it is possible to find a man with greater qualifications as a ruler of natives or with a greater knowledge of Bruni and its people than the Rajah of Sarawak, or one whose counsel would have greater weight with chiefs and people, to whom the task of reforming and regenerating that country might with wisdom have been entrusted. Then comes the question of means, so necessary to the establishment of

an effective government. To set up such a government in Bruni, and to maintain it, requires a considerable outlay, and an ever-recurring yearly subsidy. This the Rajah knew, and this he was willing and able to bear, but those "with entire knowledge of place and people" thought differently, with the result that the overflowing Treasury chest of the Federated Malay States has had to be drawn upon,[1] and within two years yet another burden in the shape of a debt of some £24,000 has been needlessly put upon an already bankrupt State; and still, with a newly-imposed tariff, which is scarcely in harmony with that of the Federated Malay States, or of Sarawak, Bruni is unable to make both ends meet, and has the pleasant prospect before it of having to negotiate a further loan with no security to offer. So much for expediency.

That the Sultan was not averse to Bruni being incorporated with Sarawak has been shown, and the fact must not be overlooked that he *was* averse to the appointment of a British Resident, and the acceptance of the agreement by himself and his Prime Minister and brother-in-law, the Pangiran Bandahara, was obtained only under pressure, and was granted in opposition to the forcibly expressed wishes of his own immediate relations, of his chiefs, and of his people. He died shortly afterwards, at a great age, though he retained his faculties until the end, and was succeeded by his son, Muhammad-ul-Alam, a minor, who was placed under the regency of his uncle, the Pangiran Bandahara.

That they might pass under the protection of the Rajah and share with his subjects the liberties and privileges the latter have gained, has always been and still is the desire of the people. With the methods of his government they are familiar and in sympathy. They and their chiefs, from the Regent downwards, have petitioned to be so placed. To them the Rajah's name is a household word, and by them he is trusted. When the change came in 1905, many of the principal nobles begged him to become the guardian of their children, to safeguard their inheritance and welfare.

[1] In reply to a question on December 15, 1906, by Sir Edward Sassoon, the Under-Secretary for the Colonies found it convenient to take no notice of Sir Edward's reference to the F.M.S. in this connection.

His great influence, acquired by an intercourse of half a century, has always been exerted for their benefit, and it is an influence that, together with his knowledge of the people and what is best for them, can scarcely be equalled by ever-changing officials.

Between the populations of Sarawak and Bruni there exists community of origin, and relationship of ideas and customs. Formerly the two countries were one. Then in a corner of that country arose the little independent raj of Sarawak, which gradually expanded up to, around, and beyond Bruni. Now Bruni is but an enclave within Sarawak, and socially, politically, and commercially, as well as geographically, is undoubtedly within the sphere of her influence.

A short description of Brooketon has already been given, showing how the prosperity of that flourishing little settlement is dependent upon the working of its colliery, and that this has been the Rajah's main reason for continuing to work it, though with a recurring annual loss which in the aggregate during the past twenty years has exceeded $800,000; of course exclusive of purchase money and interest thereon. In no one year have the receipts exceeded the expenditure, and the chances of financial improvement appear to be vastly remote; yet, in October, 1906, the Colonial Office decided, presumably "on advice given with entire knowledge of place and people," to further hamper this industry by imposing a duty on the coal exported, thereby seriously compromising the welfare of the district by taxing the sole factor in its prosperity.

The levying of such a "harsh and oppressive"[1] tax, was not only unjust, but distinctly contrary to the terms of the deed under which the Rajah holds his concession. Whilst protesting against the assumption that the Bruni Government has the right to impose such a duty, the Rajah informed the Colonial Office that if it was insisted upon he would be compelled practically to close down the colliery. In the House, Sir Edward Sassoon pointedly asked the

[1] To quote the present Secretary for Foreign Affairs when addressing the House, but a few years ago upon the subject of an export duty on English coal.

Under-Secretary for the Colonies "on what principle such a tax would be imposed upon a nascent industry which is being created at a sacrifice in an impoverished country, while on the other hand his Majesty's Government has recently withdrawn the duty levied on all coal exported from Great Britain." To this question no direct reply was or could have been given, but it was not until a year afterwards that the Colonial Office decided that the tax would not at present be imposed.

The reason given for the imposition of this tax was that all other sources of revenue at Brooketon having been hypothecated to the Rajah, it was therefore necessary to levy export duties. It has already been stated (p. 357) how these revenues had reverted to the Rajah, but it must not be supposed that they had been obtained for little or no consideration. To protect his own interests by guarding against any imposition of harassing taxes, the original lessee of the Brooketon Collieries had leased the revenues of the district from the Sultan for an annual sum, and this rent was subsequently capitalised by the payment of a sum of money equivalent to ten years' rent; thus these revenues passed from the Sultan's hands for ever, and subsequently became vested in the Rajah by purchase. A careful consideration of the deed by which these revenue rights were granted, combined with a competent knowledge of the prerogatives of the Sultan, would leave little doubt in an unprejudiced mind that the imposition of any import or export duties at Brooketon by others than the Rajah would be an infringement of the rights conveyed by that deed. The revenues derived by the Rajah under this deed (and he has not exerted his powers to increase them) represent but a very small return as interest on the purchase money; yet in face of such kindly moderation, we find the Colonial Office attempting to impose a tax on the Rajah's property, which would yield to them more than three times the amount of the legitimate revenue arising from a benevolent enterprise.

Previously to the appointment of a British Resident at Bruni, the Rajah had, as we have noticed, administered

the government in the Muara district, with the full approval of the Sultan. In compliance with the Rajah's desire, the Sultan had placed a Malay chief, as his representative, at Brooketon, but even his salary had to be paid by the Rajah. It has already been shown that certain judicial powers have been vested in the Rajah under the revenue concession, in regard to which the then British Consul at Bruni had occasion to write to the Rajah's agent at Labuan in July, 1900, that "the acting High Commissioner for Borneo believes in and acknowledges the right of Sarawak to exercise magisterial powers in Brooketon." Nevertheless, on the appointment of the British Resident at Bruni the Colonial Office called upon the Rajah to withdraw his officials and police from Brooketon, and notified him that the administration of the district would be carried on by the Resident, in the Sultan's name. In a written reply to a question by Sir Edward Sassoon, the Under-Secretary for the Colonies denied that by the deed the Rajah was authorised to maintain a police force in Bruni (*sic*), but passed over in silence the main point of Sir Edward's question as to the Rajah's powers to adjudicate as well as to impose fines throughout the district of Muara.

In a leading article which appeared in the issue of the *Straits Budget* (Singapore) of January 10, 1907, the editor attempts to refute the issues raised in the questions put by Sir Edward Sassoon in the House of Commons, and the arguments advanced in an editorial article which appeared in the *Standard* dealing with the above matters. He writes authoritatively in reply to Sir Edward and "the special pleading" of the *Standard*, and presumably his article is therefore an inspired one, for his own knowledge of Bornean affairs is restricted to what "the man in the street" can tell him, and his leader displays a deeper insight into the political aspect than can usually be found outside of a Government office. He tells us that: "Bruni wanted better administration. There were three possible ways of obtaining this—the Protectorate might have been transferred to the British North Borneo Company; it might have been handed over to the neighbouring Rajah of Sarawak; or it

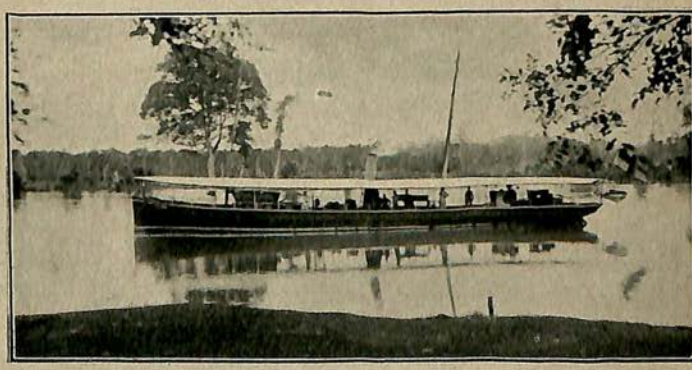
might have been incorporated in the territories administered by the Colonial Office through the Straits Settlements. Of the three alternatives the Foreign Office chose the last. No doubt Sarawak is an object lesson in administration, but it must not be forgotten that it has been fortunate in having two successive rulers of marked capacity for dealing with native races. It may not always be so fortunate, and perhaps the Foreign Office, having this possibility in view, hesitated to add to the territory of Sarawak. On the other hand, the experience of the Federated Malay States and the Straits Settlements warranted the handing over of Bruni to the Colonial Office, and we are sure that when consideration is given to the larger interests involved it will have to be admitted, one day, that the Foreign Office took the wiser course. There may come a day when British interests in Borneo will have to be amalgamated and concentrated under one administration; but until then Bruni affairs can be best administered and the interests of the natives safeguarded under the arrangement now in force."

The editor has ignored the fact that the natives of Bruni of all races—and the small population is a very diversified one—desired incorporation in Sarawak, and had petitioned for it; and he has overlooked the fact that such incorporation, whilst saving the Straits Settlements both money and trouble, could in no way have affected the position of Bruni as a British Protectorate, or have interfered with any policy which the Foreign Office may possibly have in view. So far as Sarawak is concerned, "the possibility in view" can mean only one thing: future interference with its independence, arising out of anticipated maladministration by the present Rajah's successor. Such an inuendo is as uncalled for, as it is unjust, however the suggestion may be disguised; and it behoves the Foreign and Colonial Offices to dissociate themselves from such expressions, which unfortunately have derived some colour from their subsequent actions.

That the system of government in vogue in the Federated Malay States and the Straits Settlements is

irreproachable cannot be denied; but at the same time it cannot fairly be contended—in the face of all evidence to the contrary—that it is as well adapted to the requirements of Bruni as is that in vogue in Sarawak, a system which the editor admits "is an object lesson in administration," and which his local contemporary, the *Singapore Free Press*, has before described as "a government for natives second to none."

What are "the larger interests involved" which appear, in the editor's opinion, to have necessitated the handing over of Bruni, against the wishes of the people, to a government foreign to them? The editor answers the question with a prophecy, which, unless it emanates from his own fertile brain, throws light on the policy of the British Government, and hints at a possible disregard of fair-play and treaties, which has only been made possible by the acceptance of British protection by Sarawak. The British Government as far back as 1863 fully acknowledged the independence of Sarawak under the rule of its white Rajah, and the agreement of 1888, by which the State was placed under British protection, was not intended, nor accepted, as one which would militate against that independence, and such a possibility can scarcely be construed as following in the train of that agreement.

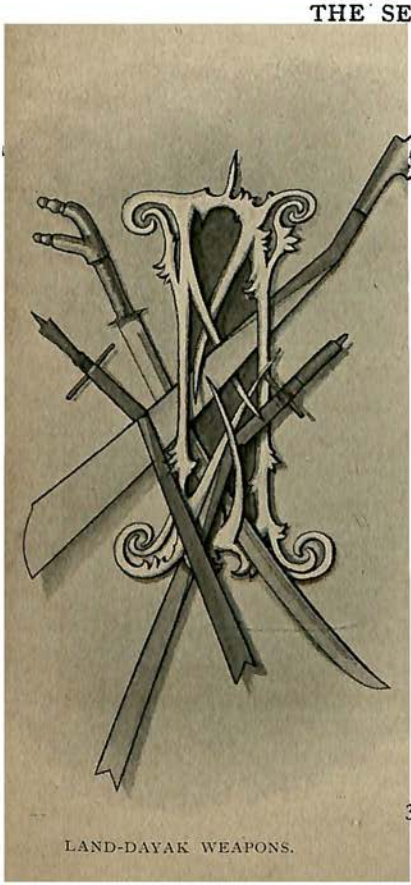


THE "GAZELLE."
(One of the small Government steamers for river work).

SEA-DAYAK WAR-BOAT.

CHAPTER XIV

THE SEA-DAYAKS



LAND-DAYAK WEAPONS.

N an address to the Council Negri in 1891, the Rajah said that he might divide his term of service of thirty-nine years into three periods of thirteen years each. The first period had been almost wholly devoted to the work of suppressing head-hunting among the Dayaks, involving frequent expeditions by sea and by land, and a life of carrying arms and keeping watch and ward against subtle enemies. The

second period had been divided between expeditions of the same nature, and the peaceful pursuits of giving or amending law, and the establishment of its supremacy. And the last period had been almost entirely taken up with attending to the political and social affairs of a settled and peaceful country. Those present who had been young with himself during the early days of his service, had been strong and able to carry through the work set before them, rough and perilous in the extreme, in mountainous regions of jungle, subject to every kind of exposure; but now these hardships were no more required, and that was well, for both they and himself were waxing old. The character of his task was changed—he and his old comrades on river and rock and in jungle could sit in their arm-chairs, and attend to the political business and the commercial progress of the country.

To these periods the Rajah has since added a fourth, and that the longest of all, during which much has been done to extinguish the lingering sparks of racial and inter-tribal hostility. These still break out occasionally amongst the Sea-Dayaks, though at wider intervals, as time goes on, but are confined to the remote interior, and to a very limited district within the State and over the borders, of which Lobok Antu is the centre. These occasional outbreaks, which but reveal the old Adam, do not trouble or affect those living outside this district, and indeed do not stir their interest any more than the border troubles in India affect the population of that country generally.

It is an Arab proverb—Be content with bread and scrape till Allah sends the jam. The first Rajah certainly had very hard scrape, and in the first periods of the second Rajah's career, he had to be content with bread and scrape, only slowly, though surely, came the jam.

The Ulu Ai[1] Dayaks, or, as the name implies, those inhabiting the head-waters of the Kapuas, Rejang, and Batang Lupar, are nowadays the sole offenders, and although they lead others astray, these troubles involve but a small proportion of the Dayak population, but five per cent, or one per cent of the entire population of Sarawak.

[1] Lit. upper waters.

A quarter of a century ago, Malays were forced to live together in villages, for their protection against the Sea-Dayaks, and were constrained to move in strong and well-armed parties when visiting these people for the purpose of trade. Now they occupy scattered houses on their farms, where they can make gardens and plantations, and they mix freely with the Dayaks without the least fear.

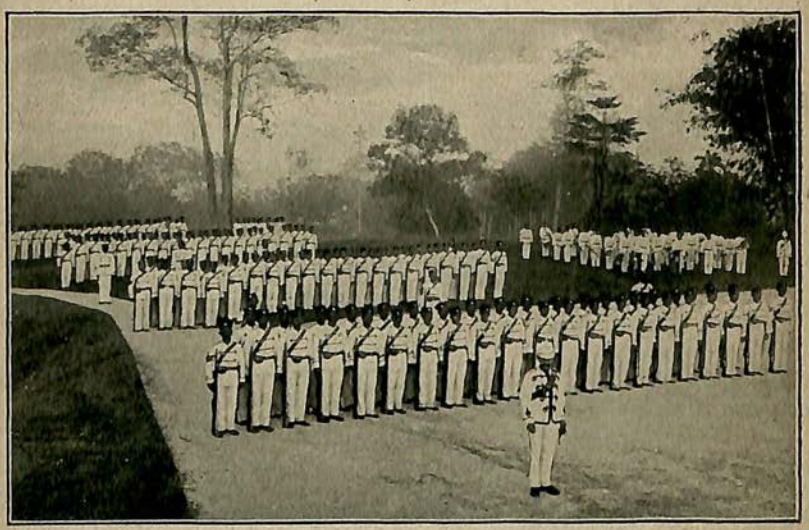
But even the Ulu Ai Dayaks, in spite of their occasional lapses, are far from being inimical to the Government, for which they are ever ready to work, and which they will as readily follow. At all times, its officers, English and Malay, are quite safe amongst them, and are received with respect and cordiality. Punishments, however severe, are submitted to, and do not affect their feelings towards the Government. On the whole these Ulu Ai Dayaks are well disposed, but they allow themselves to be led astray by the more unruly and restless spirits in the tribes; yet even of these latter, some have been brought to become staunch supporters of the Government.

The Saribas Dayaks, formerly the most malignant and dreaded of pirates and head-hunters, and the bitterest opponents of the Rajah, have long since become the most peaceful subjects of the State, and have developed into keen traders and collectors of jungle produce.

The Sekrangs, with the exception of one outbreak, noted on page 381, for which a treacherous Government chief was solely responsible, have been as peaceable and law-abiding as the Saribas. These, with the Undups and Balaus, ever the faithful friends of the Government and the bravest—"a more plucky and sterling set of bull-dogs there is not to be found," the Rajah wrote of the former many years ago—are now the best-disposed people in the State. With them perhaps may be included the Lemanaks, and the Engkaris, who, however, have not gained for themselves the same character for straightforwardness. The Ulu Ai are alone the peace-breakers. Physically these men are the finest of all, but are coarser in manners and not so brave. All these tribes, with the exception of the Undups and

Balaus, having greatly multiplied, have spread over Sarawak, and become much mingled.

Besides being very intelligent, the Sea-Dayaks are wonderfully energetic and hard-working. They are thrifty, eager to become well-off, are honest, and have few vices ; but they lack channels for their energy. Regular employment in their own country by the establishment of industries, such as plantations and mines, would do more for their redemption from savagery than years of labour among them by officials



THE SARAWAK RANGERS.

With the exception of the Band (Philippines and Malays) and three Sergeants, the men shown here are all Sea-Dayaks. The battalion is composed of some 275 Sea-Dayaks, 100 Sepoys, 50 Malays, 25 Javanese, and 20 Philippine bandsmen, under an English Commandant and an Instructor (shown). The force was established in 1846 under a native officer of the Ceylon Rifles.

and missionaries. At present, their energies are almost entirely confined to working jungle-produce ; though to seek this, they have now to go into the far interior, and this is often the cause of their getting into trouble with remote and wild tribes ; they go also to North Borneo, Dutch Borneo, Sumatra, the Malay peninsula, and even as far as Mindanau, in the Philippines. These countries they visit in large numbers, and abroad their honesty and energy have gained them a good character. Many Dayaks place the money they have saved with the Chinese on interest ; some have erected shops,

which they let for rent; but with most the prevailing idea of riches is an accumulation of old jars and brassware. There is no man keener on the dollar than the Dayak, or keener upon retaining it when gained; and there is no better labourer, but the employer of Dayak labour must be tactful and just. As they become more prosperous they discover for themselves that it is more conducive to their welfare not only to be on good terms with the Government, but at peace with their neighbours.

SARAWAK RANGERS IN MUFTI.

The Dutch in the Kapuas have experienced considerable difficulty in dealing with the many tribes of different races, especially with the Sea-Dayaks, who inhabit that vast river, which runs past the heads of the Batang Lupar and the principal left-hand branches of the Rejang river, but they have made some advance in the pacification of these people, though their methods are very different, far less energetic and much slower, than those of the Rajah.

The highlands, the spine of Borneo, along which runs the frontier, is no mountain ridge, but a broken upland district, that forms the watershed of the great rivers of Sarawak on

one side, and the still greater rivers of Dutch Borneo on the other. It is a region difficult of access from the coast on both sides, and long after the Dayaks living lower down had become peaceful, turbulence and internecine warfare remained chronic in the interior. And this was the more difficult to suppress because the aggressors had but to step across the boundary, where they could not be pursued by the forces of the Rajah. This was perfectly well understood by these savages, and was taken advantage of repeatedly, and the efforts of the Rajah were in consequence continually thwarted.

A series of expeditions was planned by his Highness that for this reason met with but partial success. It is unnecessary to record the details of each, for each repeated the experience of the former with painful iteration, and we have already given an account of some of the earliest of these punitive expeditions. But it will be necessary to record them, to show how great were the difficulties the Government had to contend with before the turbulent tribes of the interior could be brought to submission.

A great many of the Ulu Ai Dayaks had settled in the Katibas river, which is the highway from the Rejang to the Kapuas river in Dutch territory, and these Dayaks were incessantly giving trouble by making predatory raids against their enemies over the border.

The Dutch had complained of this, and the Rajah had attacked them in 1870, as we have recorded, but as they continued to give trouble, he again attacked them, for the third time, in July 1871, taking them on this occasion completely by surprise; and driving their chief, Unjup, over the frontier, where he might have been captured. Unjup was the brother of the powerful chief Balang, who had been previously executed for plotting against the Government.[1] Later on he was allowed to return, and was pardoned on making humble submission. He subsequently became a Government chief or pengulu, but he was a useless character. After the third attack, this tribe was moved to the lower waters of the Katibas, and an interval of uninhabited jungle was put between them and their enemies.

[1] Chap. XII. p. 320.

However, what is born in the bone must come out in the flesh, and, in 1874, they again broke away and attacked, on this occasion the Tamans and Bunut Malays of the Kapuas. It was, however, a case of *lex talionis*; and these people had brought it upon themselves by their own treacherous conduct in inveigling six Dayaks, who were on a peaceful visit to their country, into a Taman house, where they were seized and bound. Thence these six had been sent to Bunut, a large Malay settlement, and were there put to death in a most cold-blooded manner. Nevertheless the Dayaks had to be taught not to take the law into their own hands. But properly the Netherlands officials were the most blameworthy for not having promptly secured and punished the Malay murderers and their accomplices.

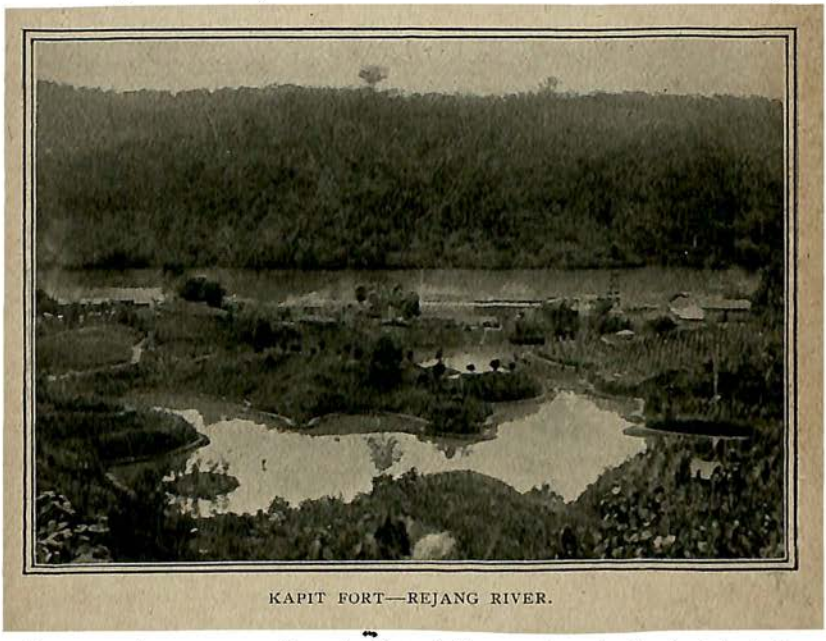
The following year the Batu Bangkai Dayaks of the Kapuas, in conjunction with some Katibas Dayaks, made a determined attack on the Lemanak Dayaks. The Lemanak is a confluent of the upper waters of the Batang Lupar. The repeated outbreaks of these turbulent natives was entirely due to their proximity to the Dutch frontier, and to their knowledge that they had but to step across the border to escape the Government forces; and at that time the Netherlands Government insisted upon the border rights being strictly respected; moreover their troops, the only forces they had at their disposal, were totally useless in acting against Dayaks, who can only be tracked by fellow Dayaks. The Netherlands officials in the Kapuas were themselves aware of their inability, and were averse to the policy of their Government. Powerless themselves, unwilling or unable to use Dayak auxiliaries, they were well content to let the Rajah do the work for them which they could not do themselves. But the central Government objected.

The Ulu Ai Dayaks of the upper Rejang, after having been peaceable for many years, were encouraged by these circumstances to break out again, and even those who were disposed for peace were terrorised into joining in these forays by a threat of having their houses burnt down over their heads, unless they came out upon the war-path.

In October, 1875, the Rajah led a large force against the

upper Batang Lupar Dayaks, who had been giving great trouble, and forty of their villages were destroyed; but deeming this punishment inadequate, the attack was followed up by another delivered two months later; the rebels, completely surprised, suffered severely, and hastened to tender their submission.

The turn of the Katibas was to follow shortly. The Kapuas Dayaks over the border were still unchecked, and knowing how incapable the Dutch officials were to subdue



KAPIT FORT—REJANG RIVER.

them, and secure as they believed themselves to be behind the frontier, they became insolent, and in February collected a large force of over 2000 fighting men to punish the Dayaks up the Batang Lupar for having submitted to the Rajah. They came within two hours' march of Lobok Antu fort, but here they found the Resident of the district at the head of a large force blocking their way. The Dutch Controleur in vain endeavoured to persuade these Dayaks to disperse and return to their homes; and they had the insolence to send the Resident an intimation that they would do so if he paid them a fine of eight old jars, and

declared that if this were refused, they would attack Lobok Antu in force. As the Resident could not cross the border to punish them, this was just what he wanted them to do, and he was perfectly prepared to give them a hot reception. But they changed their minds and withdrew, leaving him greatly disappointed that he had not been able to administer to them a much-needed chastisement.

But these Dayaks were not to be allowed to play fast and loose much longer, for towards the end of 1876, the Resident of Western Borneo administered a severe lesson to the rebels, destroying all their villages and killing a great number of the men. His expedition, conducted with vigour and thoroughness, was completely successful.

In October, 1876, the Rajah for the fourth and last time attacked the Katibas Dayaks with a small force of about a thousand Dayaks and Malays. This led to the submission of these people, and they were forced to leave the Katibas river, and move to the main river. Since then no Dayaks have been allowed to live on the Katibas, and from the Rejang side the border troubles almost ceased.

Early in 1879, led away by their principal chief, Lang Endang (the Hovering Hawk), a Government pengulu, the Sekrang Dayaks prepared to attack their old enemies, the Kantu Dayaks, in Netherlands Borneo. They were prevented in time, information of their purpose having been conveyed to the Government. Their war-prahus were destroyed, and a heavy fine was imposed upon them. Lang Endang, whilst professing loyalty to the Government, was secretly inciting the Sekrangs to resist, and they refused to pay the fine. Lang Endang offered to attack the recalcitrants if a party of Malays was sent to support him, but, as the Government was well aware that treachery was meditated, the offer was declined. Acting under instructions from headquarters, the Resident entered the Sekrang at the head of a large body of Malays and Kalaka, Saribas and Batang Lupar Dayaks in April. Lang Endang had assured the Government that he would not allow the Sekrangs to make a stand in his district, but at the same time he had collected them secretly around his

long-house, and his plan was to fall on the Government *bala* and take it by surprise. This he succeeded in doing. A large horde of armed savages surrounded the punitive force and attacked it, but the Sekrangs were badly worsted and lost many killed and wounded; the Government forces advanced, driving the rebels before them, and Lang Endang's village was burnt to the ground. The Sekrangs then submitted, paid the fine, and deposited pledges for future good behaviour. Lang Endang was declared an outlaw. He was driven from one place to another, and although he was burnt out several times, he managed to escape with his life. Finally he was suffered to settle by himself in the Kanowit, a broken-down old man, without power to do more harm. The Sekrangs had for many years been the Rajah's devoted followers; since this final outbreak they have given no more trouble, and have regained their good character.

After the establishment of the fort at the mouth of the Baleh, since removed down to Kapit in 1877, the Ulu Ai Dayaks gradually moved into that river, and in 1880, it was thickly populated by them. Scattered among the numerous Dayak villages on this river were small parties of refractory Dayaks, who had been guilty of several murders to obtain heads, and with heads renown. Though the majority of the Baleh Dayaks were well affected, and had no sympathy with these young head-hunters, they refused to give them up. Thereupon they were offered two alternatives, either they must surrender these murderers, or else move from the river to the lower waters and leave them and their followers to their fate. They chose the latter alternative. Then the refractory party retired up the Mujong branch of the Baleh, and established themselves at the foot of a lofty, precipitous mountain called Bukit Batu. Upon an almost inaccessible crag of this they erected a stockade, to which they could retreat in the event of being attacked, and draw up their ladders after them. Here they considered themselves to be secure from punishment, and in a position to raid neighbouring tribes, carry off heads, and to defy the power of the Rajah. To prevent this and

to cut off their supplies, a stockade was built at the mouth of the Mujong, and again another at the mouth of the branch stream that flowed from the mountain. A few were intimidated and came in, but the rest, though they suffered great privations, held out and evinced their determination not to surrender by cutting off three Malays, who incautiously had left the upper stockade to go fishing. They were attacked by the Rajah in February, 1881, several were killed, and their houses were burnt down; but this punishment proving ineffectual, the Rajah again attacked them in the following September, when they suffered heavier losses. After this second lesson they sent in their women and children as hostages and tendered submission. Then Bukit Batu was abandoned to its original inhabitants, the wild Punans; and the Dayaks were not allowed to live any more in the Baleh.

In 1884, a large force of Seriang Dayaks from Netherlands Borneo, under the leadership of patés, chiefs appointed by the Dutch Government, attacked Padang Kumang, also on the Dutch side, killing nine and wounding five more, and in this expedition they were joined by a Batang Lupar Ulu Ai chief, Ngumbang, with 300 followers. A heavy fine was imposed upon Ngumbang, and he was ordered to remove farther down the river, where he could be closely watched. He refused to pay and to move, on the plea that the Dutch Dayaks had been the originators and leaders of the raid, and that he did not see why punishment should fall on his head, whereas they were allowed to go scot free. Similar attacks continued to be made, not only on the Kapuas side of the frontier, but also upon the Lemanaks and Sekrangs on the Sarawak side, and the whole of this part of the country was in a ferment and disorder. On Kadang ridge, upon the border, and in its vicinity, numbers of unruly Ulu Ai Dayaks had settled, some on one side, some on the other, taking advantage of their position to slip across when fearing molestation. These Dayaks were being continually augmented by impetuous young bloods eager to acquire reputation for bravery. Nothing could be done to reduce them without the consent, if not the co-operation, of the Dutch authorities, and the Rajah applied to the Netherlands

Government to permit him to disregard the border, for this once at least. And as this hornet's nest had become a menace to the peaceful in Dutch Borneo as well as in Sarawak, consent was given.

In March, 1886, the Rajah advanced against Kadang with a large force of 12,000 men. The whole country in the vicinity of Kadang on both sides of the frontier was laid waste; eighty villages were burnt, and although the rebels made no determined stand, many were killed or wounded. This expedition was eminently successful, as it not only resulted in the submission of the rebel Dayaks on the Sarawak side, including the chief Ngumbang, but also caused consternation among those over the border, who found that they were no longer safe there, and they were prepared to submit to any conditions the Rajah might impose upon them, rather than incur the risk of another attack.

In appreciation of the signal services rendered to the country under his control by the success of this expedition, in September, 1886, the Netherlands Resident of Western Borneo wrote to the Rajah:—

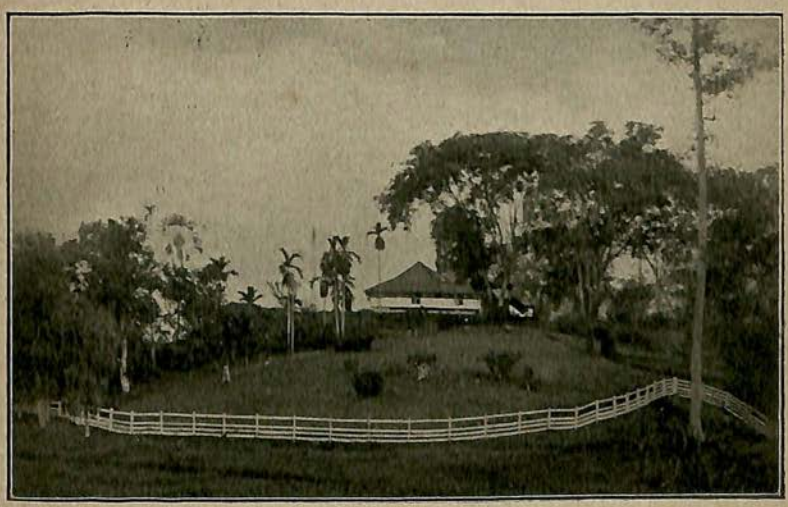
> Yesterday I received from the Comptroller the important information that the last inhabitants of Bukit Kadang, who till now have refused to submit, have been taken prisoners and brought to Sintang,[1] where they will be tried before the competent judge. On Netherlands Territory in the frontier lands there are now no more rebellious Batang Lupars. Whilst congratulating you once more, dear Rajah, with this result, being due to the success of your expedition, I assure you that my functionaries will always earnestly co-operate for the conclusion of the Batang Lupar question.

The united efforts of the Netherlands and Sarawak Governments have done much towards suppressing the border troubles. A clear understanding has been arrived at in regard to the mutual management of these turbulent Ulu Ai Dayaks. The Netherlands and Sarawak officials frequently correspond and meet to discuss arrangements, and the assistance afforded by the former has been fully recognised and acknowledged in the pages of the *Sarawak Gazette*.

[1] A large town in the Upper Kapuas—the Dutch headquarters there.

Not only in connection with these particular border-troubles, but in all other matters, the relations between the two Governments have for years past invariably been conducted in a spirit of mutual consideration and support, and with a wholesome absence of red-tapeism.

On June 27, 1888, in Lobok Antu fort, peace was formally made in the presence of the Netherlands and Sarawak officials, with the usual ceremonies of pig-killing between the Ulu Ai Dayaks and the Malohs of Kapuas,



FORT ALICE, SIMANGGANG.

thus bringing to an end a feud that had existed for many generations, and at the same time peace was made between the Ulu Ai and the Kantu Dayaks of Kapuas. A similar peace between the Ulu Ai of the Rejang and the Malohs and Tamans had been concluded at Kapit fort a short time before.

After a long term of peace, in 1890, five young Ulu Ai Dayaks, whilst on a visit to the Kapuas, came across and killed eight Bunut Malays, but bearing in mind the former act of treachery of these Malays, the people had no sympathy with the victims; however, the chiefs averted serious consequences to their country by themselves arrest-

ing the murderers and surrendering them to the Government for punishment.

In March of the same year, some Dayaks from Samunok, on the Dutch side, made a raid into Sarawak territory and killed twelve Kunjong Dayaks on their padi-farm. Two of these murderers were killed by Dutch soldiers, and a heavy fine was imposed on the rest.

The district watered by the great Rejang river, after which it is named, is, regarding it from a political point of view, the most important one in the State; and, owing to its large and diversified population, is the most difficult to govern. It contains about half the native population of Sarawak. Into it the Sea-Dayaks have spread from the Batang Lupar, and in a lesser degree from the Saribas, and have so multiplied that in numbers they now far exceed those in the adjacent districts of Kalaka, Saribas, and Batang Lupar together, without any diminution in the Sea-Dayak population of these districts, which has for years been steadily increasing.[1] Besides the many Kenyahs and Kayans, more numerous than they are in the Baram, scattered over the interior are the more aboriginal and wilder tribes, such as the Punans, the Ukits, the Bukitans, and others not found elsewhere than in the Rejang. In the old days these tribes were at feud with each other, and all were at feud with the Dayaks. The inter-tribal feuds between themselves have been brought to an end, but those between them and the Dayaks keep on breaking out spasmodically. These are old blood-feuds, which undoubtedly originated with the interior tribes, and arose probably from an instinctive fear of the gradual advance of a more dominant race into their country, and from a not unnatural desire to check it. So far as the main population of the Sea-Dayaks is concerned these feuds have long ceased, but with the Ulu Ai Dayaks of the Rejang, those living on the head-waters, brought as they are by their situation in contact with these interior tribes, the case is different. The Ulu Ai Dayaks have not always been the aggressors, even in recent times, but of late it has

[1] In 1871 there were only 3000 families of Sea-Dayaks in the Rejang, there are now over 8000.

been mainly due to their vindictiveness that all attempts to put an end to these feuds have been frustrated. For this the young men have been mostly to blame, who, when away in the remote interior collecting jungle produce, and beyond even the weak control of their own chiefs, meeting with detached parties of their old foes take such opportunities of gaining renown as warriors, which awaits the return of a Dayak with a head trophy, however meanly obtained. Indiscriminate retaliation follows in the train of these acts, the victims being the first Dayaks met with, nearly always men guiltless of any hostile act, and often peaceable produce collectors from other parts of the country. So fresh feuds are established. Several wanton crimes of this nature committed by the Dayaks of the Upper Rejang led to their being attacked by the Rajah in May, 1894, all other forms of punishment, even the extreme penalty of death, having failed to deter them from repeating these acts.

The Ulu Ai Dayaks have always been the most troublesome, and, as we have pointed out, are now the sole offenders. Not only are these people at enmity with the alien tribes above them, and those inhabiting the headwaters of the Mahkam (Koti), the Batang Kayan (Belungan), and the Kapuas, but also with the Dayaks living below them. Yet they have their redeeming points, especially those of the upper Rejang, who are a hard-working people. Many thousands of dollars worth of gutta-percha, india-rubber, and rattans annually pass from their hands to the Chinese traders, and the bulk of the jungle produce exported comes from the Rejang. The money so earned by them is not always converted into useless old jars and brassware, the usual outward signs of richness amongst Dayaks, but is placed with the Chinese on interest, and upon good security; and in such transactions the Dayaks are safeguarded by a Government regulation, which they are careful to see is not evaded.

After several years of tranquillity, in 1897 troubles again arose in the Batang Lupar. An Ulu Ai named Bantin, a man of no rank, collected a few kindred restless and badly disposed Dayaks, and, under the pretence of wrongs, more or

less imaginary, done to him and his people in former times, made several petty raids against Dayaks living farther down-river. Trifling as the successes were that he obtained they were sufficient to gain for him renown as a leader, and not only the addition of more followers, but the co-operation of a few chiefs living in his neighbourhood,—turbulent characters who had been subdued before, but who were only waiting for a favourable opportunity to break out again. The people were attacked in March, 1897, and, amongst others, Bantin's eldest son was killed. A few months later he was severely handled again for attacking some Dayaks living below Lobok Antu, and this lesson was apparently sufficient to keep his hands off his neighbours for a few years.

But in March, 1902, he again broke out, and on two occasions attacked inoffensive Dayaks below Lobok Antu, killing four; and this led to perhaps the most tragic event that the annals of Sarawak record.

The Rajah at once organised an expedition with the object of crushing and scattering this nest of rebels. To do this successfully a large force was necessary to block all roads by which the rebels could escape, especially those leading over the border; but, unfortunately, an unprecedented number of Dayaks, some 12,000, turned out at the bidding of their Ruler, far more than were wanted or expected.

Leaving Simanggang Fort on June 9, under the command of Mr. H. F. Deshon, the Resident of the 3rd Division,[1] with whom was the Rajah Muda and Mr. D. J. S. Bailey, the Resident of Batang Lupar and Saribas,[2] the force reached Nanga Delok on the 12th. Here the boats were to be left, and the *bala* was to march inland in divisions. With a company of Rangers, a strong and well-equipped body of Malays, and an overwhelming force of Dayaks success seemed assured; but a foe more dreadful than any human enemy

[1] Mr. Deshon joined the Sarawak service in 1876. In 1883 he was appointed Resident of Batang Lupar and Saribas; Divisional Resident of the 4th Division in 1892; of the 3rd Division in 1896; and in 1903, he succeeded Mr. C. A. Bampfylde as Resident of Sarawak. He retired in 1904, and was succeeded by Sir Percy Cunynghame, Bart., the present Resident.

[2] Entered the Sarawak service in 1888. Resident of Batang Lupar and Saribas 1894.

attacked the camp, and in a few hours had claimed many victims. Cholera had broken out, and rapidly spread. Panic-stricken, with their dead [1] and dying, the Dayaks at once turned their bangkongs homewards, and by mid-day of the 14th, of 815 boats that had collected at Nanga Delok, but nineteen remained, with the Malay contingent, and the Rangers, who lost eight of their comrades, and their senior non-commissioned officer. Of the small force of Dayaks who had so bravely stood by their leaders, only a hundred, or under one half, were available for service. These, under their plucky leader, the Pengulu Dalam, attempted to effect something, but the rebels had retreated farther than they dared follow, and after burning a few houses in the vicinity they were compelled to retreat to their boats. Then the small remnant of the expedition returned, passing on their way down many empty boats, and other gruesome testimony of the sad havoc caused by the cholera, to which it was subsequently ascertained at least one thousand had fallen victims.

Bantin was soon on the war-path again, harassing the lower Dayaks on a larger scale than before. Mr. Bailey twice attacked him, on the first occasion burning twenty-four villages, and forty on the second, in co-operation with a *bala* from the Rejang under Pengulu Dalam, when many of the rebels were killed, but these punishments failed to bring Bantin and his band to their senses.

An expedition led by the Rajah in March, 1903, the last one he has led in person, resulted in submission; it, however, proved but hollow, having been made by the rebels to gain time to recover from their losses. In February the following year, during the Rajah's absence in England, the Rajah Muda was compelled to attack these rebels again; and, though this expedition was successful, another had to be despatched against them in June. On this occasion a column led by Mr. J. Baring-Gould [2] was attacked by the rebels, who were driven off with a heavy loss. Nearly fifty long-houses were destroyed.

[1] They could not bury their dead in an enemy's country—the bodies would have been dug up and the heads taken.

[2] Then Resident 2nd Class 2nd Division. Now Resident of the Rejang. He joined the service in 1897.

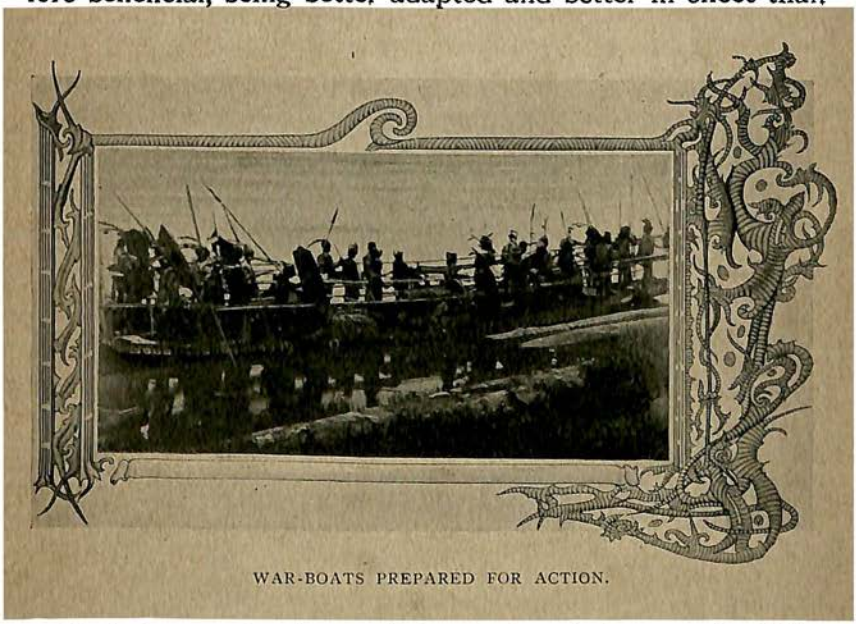
Then a large party of these wild Ulu Ai Dayaks of the Rejang and Batang Lupar settled upon Entimau hill near the head of the Katibas, and there built a strong stockade, but by a frontal attack delivered by the Pengulu Dalam, quickly followed up by an attack from their rear under Pengulu Merum, these rebels were driven out with a heavy loss. They then retired to the head of the Kanowit, where they were again severely handled by the Pengulu Dalam.

It is sometime now since Bantin with many others finally submitted to the Rajah at Kapit Fort; and though the peace that followed lasted for some little time, other outbreaks have occurred, though these have been less frequent and serious.

By establishing outposts and so bringing these warlike people more immediately under Government control it is expected that they will now soon be brought into line with the great majority of the Sea-Dayaks. But, though time and circumstances may alter the nature of these semi-savages, and head-hunting will gradually become less popular, as the danger to those indulging in it is increased, still the savage old Adam will remain dormant in the nature of the Sea-Dayaks for many years to come, and at times must break out, as surely, and for the same reason, as it does in other parts of the world, and amongst far more civilised people; as it will continue to do until the millennium.

There is a bright side to the picture, as there is to every picture, and the dark spot is to be found in one corner only. The total Sea-Dayak population may be computed at a little under 120,000, and of these over 80 per cent are now a peaceable and well-behaved people. Those with any real experience of them can testify to their many and predominating good qualities. Crime is rare amongst them; they are an easy and a pleasant people to rule, and to associate with, being by nature bright, intelligent, and kindly. "Untutored and unaffected by extraneous influences, and consequently primitive, simple, and natural, one can but be agreeably struck by their kind and hospitable manners, and by the open welcome offered when visiting them. And those well acquainted with the better qualities of these people must reflect whether any change that may be effected by civilisation and education

will ameliorate their manners and their mode of living, both socially and morally, and will prove of any paramount or real benefit to them. Education, so far as it involves improvement in agriculture and crafts must be brought about in the natural sequence of events, and as a simple consequence of mixing with other and superior races. Such developments will be slow, but they will be natural ones, ensuring changes only for the good of, and acceptable to, the people, and therefore beneficial, being better adapted and better in effect than



WAR-BOATS PREPARED FOR ACTION.

radical changes foreign to their minds and character." With these words from the greatest authority upon these people, we will conclude our notice of the Sea-Dayaks.

Of the Kayans, Kenyahs, and other inland tribes, there is little to be said. Troubles amongst these people have rarely occurred; and occasional outbreaks have been the result of anger caused by injuries suffered, unaggravated by any desire for heads. The Kenyahs and Kayans are more disciplined than the Sea-Dayaks, and better subject to the control of their chiefs, amongst whom are to be found some fine characters. Notably such an one was the Kenyah chief, Tama Bulan, of the Baram. Loyal, powerful, and intellectual,

he rendered inestimable services in the introduction of order into his country when it was acquired by the Government, and he continued these services unabated until his death in 1906. It was his earnest desire that "the Rajah, and everybody else, should know that the Kenyahs could be trusted to carry out his instructions, and were as loyal to his Government as any of his Dayaks;" and on the eve of his death, old and enfeebled, at a large meeting of Kenyahs and Kayans, he managed to deliver a short address of farewell, in which he exhorted the people not to give trouble, and after his death to remain loyal to the Rajah.[1]

[1] *The Sarawak Gazette.*

THE ASTANA, KUCHING.

CHAPTER XV

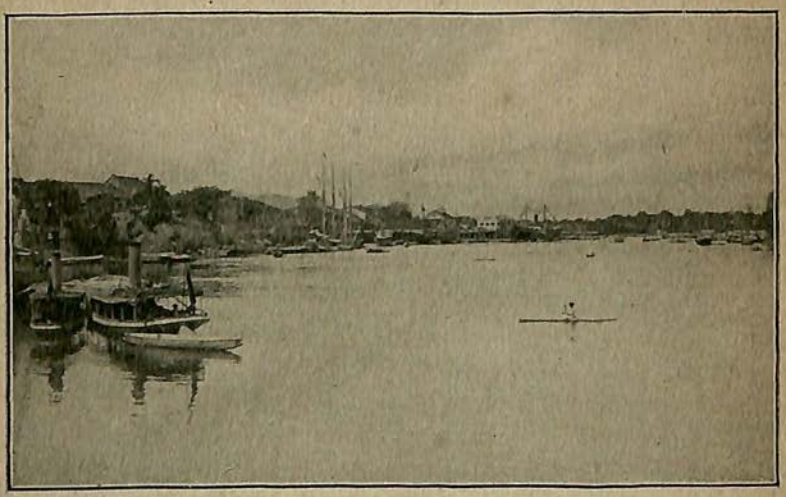
THE RAJAH AND RANEE

THE Rajah shortly after his marriage returned to Sarawak with the Ranee. This was in 1870.

When the Ranee arrived in the country which was to be her home for many years, and where by the exercise of a kindly and tactful influence she was soon to gain the enduring affection and esteem of all her people, Kuching presented a very different appearance to what it does now. It was a small place then, with but few roads, with no places of recreation or amusement, and with a very limited society. But it possessed the charm of romance, of beautiful though sometimes to the English exile wearying scenery, and above all an interesting

and lovable people, proud and courteous, yet simple and childlike in many ways. Kuching is more than double the size now, and all the recreations and amusements in which Britons delight can now be indulged in there.

As the *Royalist*, on board which were the Rajah and Ranee, rounded a tree-covered point, the lower suburbs of the town opened up. On the right hand, Malay Kampongs, set in groves of dark-foliaged fruit trees, enlivened by groups of welcoming Malays on the verandahs and on



KUCHING, LOOKING UP RIVER.

the banks, dressed in their best garments of bright colours, and by little brown children sporting in the wash of the steamer. Opposite, the Chinese sago factories, gay with strips of Turkey-red cloth embossed with words of welcome, and enveloped in the smoke of an incessant salute of crackers and bombs. At the head of the long and broad reach the river banks on both sides rise to small hills, as if guarding the entrance to the main town. At the foot of the hill on the left are the Borneo Company's offices and godowns,[1] above, their bungalows set in deep verdure. On the hill opposite, where now Fort Margherita domineers over the town like a castle with its square tower and flanking

[1] From the Malay word gedong—a warehouse.

turrets, were the Residency (now the Commandant's house) and the barracks. Rounding the bend between these hills, the main town, seated on the banks of a broad stretch of river, broke into view, the Chinese bazaars, or town, and the public buildings on the left, with the old white fort (now the jail) on the point above. On the right, the Astana, or palace, standing in park-like gardens amid tall palms and other trees. On both banks above are the upper Malay Kampongs, and in the distant back-ground the jungle-clad range of Matang in sapphire blue, rising to the noble peak of Serapi.

The bazaars were gaily decorated in the showy and profuse fashion affected by the Chinese, and the native shipping—brigs, schooners, junks, and prahus of all descriptions—were gay with bunting, the ensign of Sarawak predominating, and here and there the red, white, and blue flag of the Netherlands; the Natuna flag, black with a white canton; and the triangular mercantile flag of China, a green three-clawed dragon on a yellow ground. From the British Consulate only flapped in the light wind the Union Jack.

As the *Royalist*, with the Rajah's flag flying at the main, steamed slowly up to her anchorage, the booming of cannon announced to the people far and wide the return of their Ruler with his bride, and simultaneously with the first gun, down the whole length of the town burst forth a deafening crash of crackers and bombs—the Chinese time-honoured method of saluting.

From the parade-ground, led by the Commandant, defiled a line of white uniformed Rangers, with black facings and belts, the guard of honour marching to the Astana. The Siamese state-barge [1] manned by Rangers, and with the Resident on board, shot alongside to convey their Highnesses ashore, and, as they landed, an orderly [2] unfurled the symbol of sovereignty—the large yellow umbrella.

At the Astana landing-place were all the English residents, Malay chiefs, the leading Chinese, and a few Indian merchants. A bright picture this assembly presented,

[1] See footnote 2, p. 296.

[2] Stout old Inchi Subu, mentioned before.

with the handsome uniforms of the officials, the rich-coloured robes and turbans of the hajis, and the loose silk costumes of the Chinese. Above was seen a knot of brown Dayaks, the men wearing long decorated waistcloths of gay colours, black leglets and ivory armlets; the women in short petticoats fringed with silver coins, and in all the splendour of their brass and copper corselets, armlets, anklets, and coronets, burnished and sparkling in the sun.

With a tear on his bronzed cheek, a tear of joy, the old Datu Bandar,[1] the worthy son of a gallant father, steps forward to welcome his beloved Chief with his beautiful bride, and his was not the least valued of the many fervent greetings they received that day.

As the Rajah and Ranee passed on to the Astana the Royal salute was given by the guard of honour in a manner worthy of the best-drilled troops; but one thing was lacking,—a national anthem,—and little did any one there present dream that the accomplished lady then stepping for the first time on Sarawak soil would shortly supply that want by composing one for the country, which was to become so dear to her.[2]

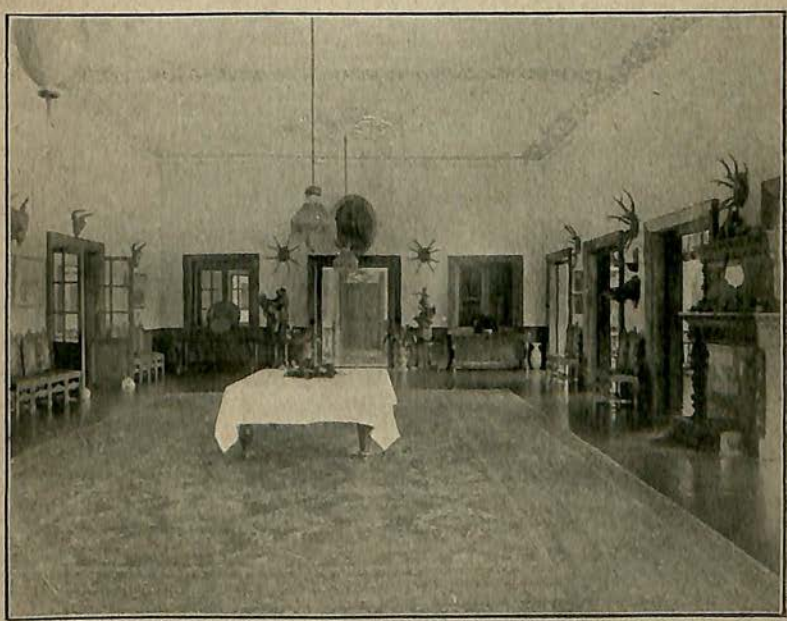
Something must be said of the Astana,[3] the residence of the Rajah and Ranee, which had then just been completed. It is built of brick in three separate sections, with a roof of iron-wood shingles, in appearance closely resembling slates. The illustration will best convey an idea of its exterior appearance, which in the opinion of some has been sacrificed for the sake of internal comfort. However that may be, no more comfortable or cooler house exists in the East. On the first or upper floor of the centre section are the drawing-rooms and dining-room, spacious and lofty, and surrounded by a broad verandah. At the back of the house, off the dining-room, is the library. The side blocks contain the bedrooms, the lateral verandahs of which are connected with those of the central block by covered bridges. In the basement are the Rajah's office, guard-room, household offices,

[1] Bua Hasan. He succeeded his brother Muhammad Lana, who had died some time before.

[2] The words were written by the Rajah—it is an ode in honour of the late Rajah.

[3] Sanksrit, Asthana—palace.

DRAWING-ROOM, ASTANA.



DINING-ROOM, ASTANA.

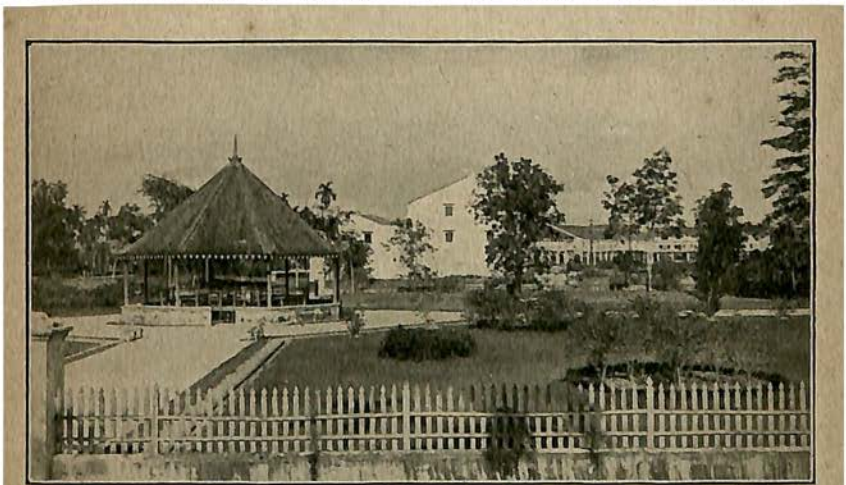
bathrooms, etc. The entrance is in the tower, in the lower part of which is the main staircase, and above is the billiard room. In a separate building, connected with the main building by a covered passage, are the bachelors' quarters.

The well-laid-out gardens are extensive, and contain many beautiful tropical plants. Behind the Astana is the old graveyard of the former Malay Rajahs, in which are some well-carved monuments of iron-wood. Beyond the gardens are grazing lands. The Rajah has two cattle farms, and he takes a great interest in rearing cattle, importing pedigree bulls from England to improve the stock in the country. Kuching is almost wholly supplied with milk and butter from the Astana dairies.

Above the Astana are Malay Kampongs, below, the fort and barracks, and beyond these more Malay Kampongs. On the opposite side of the river is the town, the upper part of which is comprised of the principal Malay Kampongs, where reside the datus; and these stretch along the river for a mile on each side of the road which runs parallel with it down to the Malay Mosque. This is a square building of some dignity, with a pyramidical roof supported inside by noble pillars, and near the mosque is the Datus' Court-house, and one of the Government schools for Malays. Adjoining this is the business portion of the town, substantially built of brick, whitewashed and clean, which extends down to the creek, from which the town takes its name, in two long streets with cross-connecting streets. In the centre is the Court-house with the Government offices; the markets are on one side, and the jail on the other; behind are the Police Station and the Government Dispensary. Beyond the Kuching creek are the Borneo Company's offices and godowns, above which, on the hill behind, are the houses of the manager and his assistants. Beyond again another Kampong, in which there are a good many houses of foreign Malays and some Chinese, and this portion of the town extends to the race-course. Between these and the river are the sago factories.

Behind the central portion of the town is the S.P.G. Mission ground, upon which are the church, Bishop's House,

and Vicarage, the Boys' and Girls' Schools, and the Public Library. On the opposite side of the road is the esplanade with the band-stand, and beyond the police barracks. Then, landwards, are bungalows, club-houses, the Museum, and the Residency, behind which is another Malay Kampong, and farther on the Roman Catholic church, convent, and schools, and beyond these the golf links. The town reservoirs and the General Hospital are beyond the S.P.G. Mission ground. Dotted about in the suburbs are the houses and bungalows



THE ESPLANADE, KUCHING.

of Europeans and well-to-do Chinese, standing in pleasant gardens, and intermingled with these are the humbler homes of Chinese and Malay gardeners.

Kuching is well supplied with roads, and is the only town in Borneo in which wheel-traffic is general. It has practically an inexhaustible water-supply, the water being brought down in pipes a distance of 11 miles from Matang mountain, a work lately completed at great cost. It has a telephone service, which extends to upper Sarawak, and which will be gradually extended along the coast to all the principal outstations. The town is lighted with Lux lamps. Its public buildings are well constructed and adequate for their purposes. In addition to the Mission schools are three Government schools, of which notice shall

be made in a following chapter. The Museum is a handsome building, and contains both an ethnographical and a natural history collection, which have gained a wide reputation.

In 1839, Kuching was nothing but a small collection of wooden thatched hovels, now it is one of the largest towns in Borneo, if not the largest, and is commercially the most important. On pages 61 and 91 will be found illustrations showing what Kuching was then, and what it is now. Then, Bruni, though fast declining from its former prosperous state, was in a far more flourishing condition than Kuching, which had been reduced to desolation by oppression. Fifty years later an anonymous writer, evidently a naval officer, after giving a good account of Bruni and its circumstances, wrote :—

> When we left we could not but draw an unfavourable contrast between the ancient town and the young capital of the adjacent State of Sarawak, Kuching, which we had lately visited. There, under European rule, the jungle has been cleared, and a well built and planned town has sprung up, with good roads, handsome public buildings, an efficient police—all the essentials of civilisation in fact ; Malays, Dayaks, and Chinese live and trade amicably together, and all the resources of a rich country are being opened up ; while the river-banks are beautified with picturesque bungalows nestling among the trees, with green lawns, such as one rarely sees out of England, stretching down to the water's edge.[1]

On September, 21, 1870, was born to the Rajah a daughter, Ghita, and on February 20, 1872, twin sons, James and Charles. The birth of these sons was a cause of general rejoicing among the natives of all classes in Kuching ; but Ghita, a very charming child, was the principal pet among the Malays, who entertained a lively and tender affection for her, which she reciprocated, for the little girl seemed to be never so happy as when in their company.

In August, 1872, the Rajah and Ranee visited Pontianak, where they met with a very cordial reception by the Dutch Resident, Mr. Van der Shulk, and the civil, naval, and military officers ; in November, in the same year, they paid a visit to the Governor-General of Batavia, by whom they were

[1] "The Lake City of Borneo," *St. James' Budget*, June 9, 1888.

also most cordially received. The Dutch had long since given up their expectation and hope of acquiring Sarawak.

In September, 1873, the Rajah and Ranee left for England, leaving the administration of the country in the hands of Mr. J. B. Cruickshank and a Committee of Administration.

In ascending the Red Sea in the *Hydaspes* the heat was intense.

> All in a hot and copper sky,
> The bloody sun at noon
> Right up above the mast did stand,
> No bigger than the moon.

The poor children, parched, panting, struck with heat apoplexy, died one after another. James on October 11, Ghita on October 14, and Charles on October 17, and were committed to the deep.

The Rajah was created a Commander of the Crown of Italy in April, 1874, and in July, 1899, was promoted to be Grand Officer.

On September 26, 1874, Charles Vyner, the Rajah Muda, was born. The name Vyner was taken from Sir Thomas Vyner, Lord Mayor of London in 1654, who entertained Oliver Cromwell in the Guildhall. His only son, Sir Robert Vyner, on the contrary was a zealous Royalist, and sacrificed some wealth for the cause of the King, and being also in turn Lord Mayor, entertained King Charles II. in 1670. He had been created a baronet, but the baronetcy became extinct in his only son, George, and then the estate of Eastbury in Essex, purchased by the profit of the old Puritan's merchandise, passed to the two daughters of the grandson, the founder of the family, and from one of them, Edith, the Brookes claim descent, through Elizabeth Collet, great-great-granddaughter of Edith, who married a Captain Robert Brooke (son of Robert Brooke of Goodmansfields, London), and Mr. Thomas Brooke, father of the first Rajah, was their grandson.

Whilst the Rajah was in England, the late Lord Derby was at the Foreign Office. He was always very friendly towards Sarawak, and paid the Rajah the compliment of saying that the British Government could never have made such a success of Sarawak, as he had done. This was a fact *qui*

saute aux yeux of all such as knew anything of Foreign Office and Colonial Office ways, but it was none the less satisfactory that the obvious truth should be admitted. Lord Derby and Lord Clarendon were the only two Foreign Secretaries who displayed any appreciation of the work that was being done in Sarawak, and who did not consider its Ruler as beneath their notice.

Lord Grey, formerly Secretary for Colonial Affairs, and the reformer of Colonial administration, was another Minister who extended his sympathies towards Sarawak, and continued to do so long after he had ceased to hold office. In 1894, a few years before his death, he wrote to the Rajah, "Though I do not remember ever having had the advantage of meeting you, the long friendship with your uncle, which I enjoyed, induces me to write you a few lines for the purpose of expressing the great pleasure with which I have read the account of the present state of Sarawak in the *Pall Mall Gazette*. From the first, as you may be aware, I have taken a deep interest in the work done by Sir James Brooke in Borneo, and have never ceased to follow up the history of the Settlement he formed. I am glad to learn how wisely and successfully you have been carrying on his work, and it has been a great satisfaction to me to read the account of the continued prosperity of your little State." Little in regard to population perhaps, but as large in area as the four Federated Malay States along with Johore.

The Rajah and Ranee returned to Sarawak in June, 1875, and were received with demonstrations of the greatest joy, but at the same time with tokens of sincere sympathy for their loss.

The difficulties that the Rajah had to overcome in suppressing the many intertribal feuds still existing among the thousands of warlike natives, of so many different tribes and races, comprising the interior population of Sarawak, receive illustration from the grievances presented to him on his visiting Baleh fort in the same year. This fort was 180 miles up the Rejang, and had been constructed during his absence in England. It has since been moved down to Kapit.

The complaints made were these :—

Uniat, a Kayan chief, complained that fourteen of his women and children, among the latter two of his own, had been killed by the Poi Dayaks.

Kanian, a Dayak chief, complained of six of his people having been killed by Kayans of the Tinjar (Baram) then in Bruni territory. No redress could be promised in such a case as this.

Apai Bansa, a Dayak, brought as his grievance that

THE GENERAL HOSPITAL, KUCHING.

seven of his people had been murdered by Lisums, a wild tribe living far in the interior. In this case also, the Rajah was not in a position to afford help.

Ingan, a Dayak, complained about the murder of his father and fifteen companions, by Pieng Kayans of the Mahkam or Koti in Dutch territory.

Madang, a Dayak, complained that one of his followers had been murdered by another Dayak.

Among other matters gone into was the attack in force of Rejang Dayaks upon the Tamans and Bunut Malays of the Kapuas, provoked by the treacherous and cold-blooded murder of six Dayaks who had gone on a peaceful errand

to that river to search for some lost relatives, who had been captured by Tamans on a former raid. This matter has already been referred to in the preceding chapter.

If it has been found impossible in half a century to crush out completely all traces of head-hunting in a country larger than Great Britain and Ireland put together, one cannot forget that it is not so many generations since the wild Highlander was seen descending upon fold and shepherd, willing to risk his own life, and when needs must be, to take that of another, provided he could but return to his own filthy hovel, laden with spoil.

All praise then be to those whom philanthropy has induced to lend a helping hand to this once wretched spot, so long shut out from civilising influence, and to those, who in the face of a life of isolation and discomfort, are still found willing to grapple with barbarism in its most hideous form—to him who rules the country, whose entire life has been devoted to the interests of his people, as is now that of his Ranee, beloved by all who know her; and let him, too, be remembered whose genius, enterprise, and unselfishness founded this plucky little kingdom of Sarawak, the good Sir James Brooke, who died battling hard—as his successor still earnestly strives—to instil into the minds of his wild subjects that beautiful precept "Pax hominibus bonæ voluntatis."[1]

On August 4, 1875, the Rajah wrote to the Netherlands Resident of Western Borneo:—

I fear the time has not yet arrived for peace in these inland regions, and that years of disquiet will take place before these people turn their minds entirely to peaceful pursuits, but I am fully aware it is utterly beyond the power of any civilised power to put a stop to the proceedings of these wild and unapproachable people

—referring to the distant tribes living on the borders. "Time and continual exertion must work out the problem of improvement," was the opinion the Rajah expressed somewhat later, who years before, whilst condemning arbitrary measures, stated his opinion that "forbearance should not go beyond a certain point in dealing with Dayaks, who have the feelings of children; kindness and severity must proceed hand in hand with such a people," and no better authority upon the management of such people exists.

[1] A. H. Gray, *Wanderings in Borneo*, 1874.

On August 8, 1876, Bertram Wilfes Dayrell Brooke, the Tuan Muda, was born.[1]

Upon April 11, 1877, the Rajah had a very narrow escape from drowning whilst ascending the Rejang, accompanied by Messrs. M. G. Gueritz[2] and Deshon, in a small Government steamer, the *Ghita*.

Upon approaching Baleh fort, a heavy fresh was coming down the river Baleh, and, on attempting to cross this to gain the anchorage in the main river, the steamer was driven into the bank. She was almost pressed under water, and as a general smash appeared imminent, the Rajah seized a branch, hoping to swing himself ashore. It snapped, by the vessel being rammed against it, and he was precipitated into a whirlpool, which sucked him under and swept him away. Fortunately, as he rose for the last time, a boat coming from the fort was carried by the stream past him, he was laid hold of, and pulled on board, unconscious from exhaustion. Messrs. Gueritz and Deshon stuck to the steamer, which had been forced on her beam ends, and had her funnel, awnings, and stanchions torn off by the overhanging boughs. Nearly all on board were forced into the current, but were saved by the Dayak boats that came hurrying to the rescue.

As is the case in these inland rivers, the force of the fresh quickly subsided, and with the help of many willing Dayaks the steamer was extricated from her perilous position and towed to her anchorage.

Harry Keppel Brooke, the Tuan Bongsu, was born on November 10, 1879.

In June, 1882, as already related in the preceding chapter, the Rajah visited Bruni, and obtained from the Sultan the cession of the districts lying between Kedurong Point and the Baram.

Owing to the disturbed condition of Limbang and Bruni,

[1] Educated at Winchester, and Trinity College, Cambridge. He rowed in the Cambridge eight in 1900, and again in 1901, when he was President of the University Boat Club. Served in the Royal Field Artillery from 1901 to 1904, when he retired. He was A.D.C. to the Governor of Queensland, 1905-1907. Married, July 1904, Gladys Milton, only daughter of Sir Walter Palmer, Bart., M.P., and has one daughter.

[2] Joined the Service in 1870; died at Baram, of which district he was the Resident, in 1884.

the Rajah left for England in September 1887, to watch the interests of Sarawak, and to lay before the British Government the true state of affairs in these places. He was accompanied by the Ranee and their three sons, who had joined him in Sarawak a few months previously. He wished to impress upon the Government the real feelings of the Limbang people in regard to annexation to Sarawak, and to remove the impression that his Government had been fostering discontent in the former place with a view to encroachment. Before leaving Singapore, the Rajah wrote the following note to Mr. F. R. O. Maxwell, in whose charge the Government had been left:—

Before leaving this for England, I must express my very sincere gratification for the kind way all Europeans, Datus, and Natives have received our sons in Sarawak. I can assure you and all, it has given both the Ranee and myself great satisfaction, and we feel we cannot be too thankful to the whole community for this mark of their confidence and good feeling.

The Rajah returned to Sarawak in May, 1888, and laid before the Supreme Council a memorandum which had been agreed upon by her Majesty's Cabinet Council granting protection to Sarawak. Subject to one alteration, the memorandum was accepted. This alteration was admitted by the Cabinet Council, and on the 14th June, the agreement affording British protection to the State was signed and sealed by the Rajah in Council. This agreement acknowledges the Rajah as the lawful Ruler of the State of Sarawak, which shall continue to be governed and administered by him and his sucessors as an independent State under the protection of Great Britain, and confers no power on her Majesty's Government to interfere with the internal administration of the State. Any question arising respecting the succession to the present or any future Ruler of Sarawak is to be referred to her Majesty's Government for decision. The foreign relations of the State are to be conducted by her Majesty's Government, and in accordance with its directions. Her Majesty's Government have the right to establish British Consular officers in any part of the State, but these are to receive exequaturs from the Rajah. It

confers the rights of the most favoured nations upon British subjects, commerce, and shipping, and such rights and privileges as may be enjoyed by the subjects, commerce, and shipping of Sarawak. It, moreover, provides that no cession or alienation of any part of the territory of Sarawak shall be made to any foreign State, or to the subjects and citizens thereof, without the consent of her Majesty's Government.

Sarawak, for nearly fifty years, without protection,

MALAY MEMBERS OF SUPREME COUNCIL.

From left to right—The Datu Hakim (Haji Muhammad Ali), The Datu Bandar (Muhammad Kasim), The Datu Imaum (Haji Muhammad Rais), and Inchi Muhammad Zin.

assistance, or encouragement of any kind, had gone on her way progressing slowly but surely, and maintaining her independence in spite of many reverses and misfortunes; and, long before the protection was granted, had developed into a prosperous State with a bright future before her. For her advancement and security, that protection which the late Rajah had so ardently desired and so sorely needed, time has shown was not really necessary. Could he have foreseen this in the days of his country's adversity, he might have spared himself many rebuffs from those who should have upheld him in his noble work, but who chose either to flout

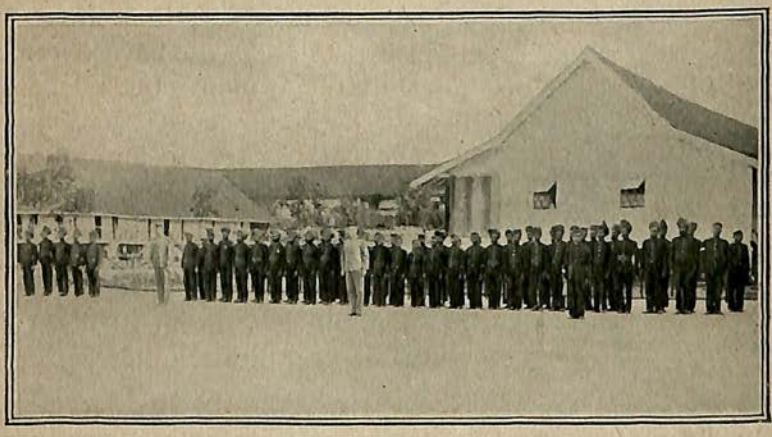
or to obstruct it. He was impressed with the conviction, not unreasonably entertained, that the Dutch cast a lickerish eye upon Sarawak, and he was afraid that, failing England, Sarawak would have to fall back on the Netherlands Government for help in the event of an insuperable reverse or of bankruptcy. That would lead to the little State being annexed to the Dutch possessions in the island; and he was by no means confident that the British Government would not allow this to take place. But since that period, in the desire for colonial extension, which has grown in foreign nations, appeared another danger to the independence of the State, a danger which, if it arose, it would have been impossible for its Ruler to have averted unless protected, and state-craft offers many methods, and has shown many examples of a strong power starting a quarrel with one that is weak, that has led to annexation. Consequently, for Sarawak protection was needed; and for England it seemed to be imperative, to prevent a country in such a commanding position and with so many conveniences falling into the hands of a foreign power.[1]

On August 15, 1889, the fiftieth anniversary of the landing of Sir James Brooke, in a speech the Rajah said:—

That he had had the honour, and perhaps the misfortune, to figure in the Government through the greater portion of that time. No country could traverse so long a period without great changes taking place in her for better or for worse. A half century is long enough to make or to break any nation or government, any man or people. Fortunately, we are all here to witness the fact that Sarawak has weathered the storms and escaped the breakers that were deemed likely to wreck her. She rode safely to port, or, to change the metaphor, she stood now, he believed, upon a surer and more solid basis than ever before. He would not say that this country had advanced with rapidity, though many might entertain a contrary opinion, but we knew that we have been left to work out the problem of government and development of commerce for ourselves, and, if

[1] As far back as 1865, Mr. Layard (afterwards Sir Henry), then Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, foresaw the possibility of the seizure of Sarawak by another country, and he "held decisively, looking at the progress of the French and the conduct of the Dutch, that Sarawak should not be allowed to pass into the hands of either of these nations." He was, therefore, in favour of protection, and his opinions were a reflection of those of Lord John Russell; but the New Zealand troubles again scared the Cabinet.

he might say so, to paddle our own canoe, with but scant assistance from without. It was just that slow and gradual development—first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear—the law of all healthy growth—which had taught us how to govern this country with its many dusky races. There is give and take in all departments of life, and the native inhabitants had taught us, and we had taught them, till both ourselves and they had acquired, and he might say, been saturated with perfect mutual confidence, the one with the other. This perfect mutual confidence was the true basis on which the prosperity and security of the State reposed, and none more solid could be conceived; none of which all present had a greater right to be proud. Nothing, he would venture to say, had been rushed or



THE KUCHING POLICE.

The total police of the State numbers about 225 men; of which about 80 are Sikhs and Sepoys, the rest being Malays.

pushed forward with inordinate precipitation, so as to cause reaction or to injure the prospects of the future.

Writing on the subject of Sarawak for the Geographical Society of Australia, the French writer and explorer, Edmond Cotteau, who visited Sarawak in 1884, says:—

In reality thirty Englishmen, no more, govern and administer economically the country, and that with only a few hundred native soldiers and policemen, and almost without written laws. A handful of men of a strange race is blindly obeyed by 300,000 Asiatics! To what must we attribute this great result if not to the justice and the extreme simplicity of the Government? What better example could be followed in the future when the great island of New Guinea becomes a dependency of some European Power?

The Rajah was created a G.C.M.G. at the time that protection was granted.

In October, 1889, the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, issued instructions that her Majesty's ships were in future to salute the Rajah with twenty-one guns.

His Highness left for England in October, 1889, again to confer with the Foreign Office on the Limbang question, and returned in February, 1890, when he at once proceeded to Limbang, which river was annexed to Sarawak by him on March 17. The events that led up to this step being taken, and the reasons that induced the Rajah to take them, have been fully explained in the chapter on Bruni. Though it was evident to all with the smallest acquaintance with Bornean affairs that the Rajah's action was purely protective in the interests of the inhabitants of Limbang, and was taken at their earnest desire; that it was even to the advantage of Bruni itself, menaced as it was by the rebels in the Limbang, the British Government having declined to interfere, yet this action was generally condemned by the English public, who knew nothing of the circumstances, and regarded it as an injustice done to the Sultan, the very person, and about the only person, against whom his subjects needed protection. The British Government had offered the Sultan assistance, but the acceptance of this would have involved the appointment of a British Resident, and the consequent adoption of a just Government; this did not in anywise accord with the views of the Sultan. He then turned to the Rajah, who was willing to assist him in bringing about peace by peaceful means, but this also was not what the Sultan wanted. An agreement exists between Bruni and Sarawak that the latter shall help the former if troubles beset her, but the Sultan's view, that Sarawak should reduce the Limbang people to submission by force of arms and subject them to a crushing tyranny, was not an interpretation of this agreement which the Rajah could or would accept.

Mr. L. V. Helms,[1] a Dane, twice visited the Limbang river a short time before its annexation, and he wrote:—

[1] Formerly manager of the Borneo Company, Limited, mentioned in Chaps. VI. and IX.

I have come in contact with many of the principal chiefs, and have heard from them a story of misrule which is a scandal even in an Asiatic country, and should disentitle the rulers to be considered a government, or to enjoy the rights and privileges as such. When the subject has to abandon his house and property and seek concealment in the jungle to avoid being robbed of his goods and perhaps of his children by the Sultan and his menials, then they rightly forfeit their position as rulers. The present state of things in this river is very deplorable, and unjust to the natives, who sit on the rail, uncertain who will be their master, anxious to give allegiance to Rajah Brooke's government, but dreading lest they should be handed back to their old taskmasters.

For the sake of humanity it is to be hoped that this suspense may soon be terminated by the transfer of the river to the Sarawak Rajah's government, who may justly point to the history of Sarawak and its position to-day as a good title to the last territory of a Ruler who has long ceased to perform the duties of that office to his subjects.

On July 31, 1891, the Rajah, at a meeting of the Council Negri, proclaimed his son, Vyner, as his successor, whenever it should please God to take him hence; and decreed that seven days after his own death the Rajah Muda should be proclaimed Rajah of Sarawak. This duty he entrusted to the members of Council, both European and native, to see that it was solemnly carried out.

Having bought up some questionable rights over North Borneo, which do not appear to have been utilised, granted by the Sultan to some Americans in 1865, Mr. (now Sir Alfred) Dent and Baron Von Overbeck, an Austrian, in 1877 and 1878, obtained from the Sultans of Sulu and Bruni the cession of North Borneo, from the Sibuku river on the east coast to the Kimanis on the west coast,[1] a territory containing some 30,000 square miles, with a population of about 150,000; and this led to the formation of the chartered British North Borneo Company in 1881.

During the first few years of its administration, the Company made such tardy advance towards the realisation of the bright promises that had been held out by its promoters, and the prospects before it being considered by

[1] The borders of British North Borneo now march with those of Sarawak, further cessions to the south having since been obtained by the former, and to the north by the latter State.

many to offer but little hope of ultimate success, in 1893 it was proposed by some persons interested in North Borneo, that the country should be incorporated with Sarawak, provided that the Rajah would guarantee to the shareholders a small interest upon the capital paid up, to be increased *pro rata* with the increase of the revenue. The capital invested was to be viewed in the light of a loan to the State, and was to be paid off as the Rajah could find the means to do so. The shareholders, however, had so great a faith in the undeveloped resources of their property that they declined to part with it. But, being sensible of the benefit they would derive from the Rajah's influence and experience in subjecting to order a people not altogether satisfied with the new régime, as also in establishing a form of government adapted to them and to the conditions of the country, they empowered their Directors to offer him the position of Governor-General. Needless to say, the Rajah could not accept this honour, and so the matter dropped.

Had this measure been effected, whatever benefit the northern State might have derived, it is obvious that it might in many ways have proved detrimental to the interests of Sarawak. An union of the two States would have ensured economy in administration to British North Borneo, and probably a more beneficial government to its people. This was the opinion of Lord Brassey, himself a Director of the Company, an opinion which appears to have been shared by other Directors :—

I hold strongly to the opinion, said his Lordship, that the North Borneo Company would do well to hand over its territory to Rajah Brooke. I believe the attempt to administer the affairs of the country by a Board of Directors in London is simply hopeless. The members of the Board have no local knowledge, they are entirely in the hands of their local officers, and the tendency is to increase the staff and create an expensive system of administration, which is not suitable to the circumstances of the country. North Borneo is an exceedingly poor country, and I see very little prospect for it. Rajah Brooke is a man of responsibility and high standing in those parts of Borneo, and would bring to bear upon the Government a life-long personal experience. He has a deep knowledge of the Malay population, with whom he has great influence. He could maintain an

adequate authority with a much smaller staff of officials than we now require. He would have no need of a system of police such as we have created, consisting of Sikhs from the Army of India, who are necessarily paid at a high rate. The cost of the Sikh police is far beyond the resources of the country.

North Borneo has prospered beyond Lord Brassey's expectations; but the country is burdened with a heavy debt.

Early in 1900, the veteran, the Hon. Sir Henry Keppel,

CHINESE SHOPS, KUCHING.

G.C.B., then Admiral of the Fleet, paid his final visit to Sarawak. His last visit had been in 1867, and we have noticed (Chap. III. p. 89) how he had been impressed by the changes he saw, but considerable as the progress had then been, he must have found some difficulty in recognising the town in 1900, and in discovering familiar landmarks.

The regard and friendship which the old Admiral bore for the late Rajah was extended to his "old friend and shipmate," the present Rajah, whom he has described as being "quiet, reserved, and gentlemanlike, with a determination not to be surpassed, and with a keen sense of justice—qualifications fully appreciated by the chiefs."

The last letter he wrote to the Rajah just before his death three years later will be of interest to our readers.

Many thanks, my dear Rajah, for your kind letter. I was wondering when or whether we were to meet again. I should like to see my most promising Mid again and shake him by the hand before I depart hence. Our late profession is disappearing, and few will ever see or know what we knew. May you long live to increase doing good, and few will have led a happier or more useful life. . . . Our last meet was in London when you were off to the country to look after your hunters, and with the coronation in view I hardly expected to see you again. I am here enjoying the climate I love so well, and care not at my age if I never return, but must I suppose put in an appearance in England, although unfit to attend the coronation. I am uncertain in my movements, and am afraid I shall be unable to pay you a visit; and for the few months I may be allowed to live I can form no future plans.

Sarawak had no more faithful, no truer friend.

Partly on account of her having to superintend the education of her sons, and of having to make for them a home in England, but mainly owing to her health rendering any long sojourn in the tropics inadvisable, the Ranee has not been able to reside in Sarawak for some years, a matter of deep regret to all. Her last visit was one of six months, after an absence of eight years, and of this visit the *Sarawak Gazette* says: "universally popular as her Highness always has been amongst all classes, her visit has done much to maintain and increase the native contentment and appreciation of the rule of an Englishman over the country." Indeed her presence in Sarawak has always been greatly valued by all, natives and Europeans alike. In the former she took the deepest interest, an interest which has not been discontinued since her departure from the country. To her the absence of most of the pleasures and luxuries of a civilised life was more than counterbalanced by the interests that occupied her time and thoughts in her adopted country, and of her adopted people, amongst whom she was always happy and at home, even under trying circumstances. She was the moving spirit in the promotion of the social and industrial welfare of the women and children, and was always an honoured and welcome guest at the social functions of the Malays, to whom

her receptions at the Astana were always open. Writing of a levée at the Astana, Beccari[1] says:—

It is pleasant to record the general reciprocity of good feeling which is such a characteristic of the Sarawak community, cordially uniting Europeans and natives in bonds of mutual consideration and esteem. The barriers of race and rank are obliterated in this mutual and cordial goodwill. Together with representatives of the people, there was at the Astana a large sprinkling of the Malay aristocracy,

INTERIOR OF MUSEUM.

which has always shown itself faithful to the enlightened government of the Brookes, even at the most critical times.

In August 1897, having finished his education (Winchester and Magdalene College, Cambridge) the Rajah Muda permanently joined the Rajah's staff to learn the methods of his government, and to gain a knowledge of the diversified races over which he is destined to rule. After having spent several years in the provinces as Resident of different districts, on May 12, 1904, by proclamation the Rajah decreed that the Rajah Muda should in future share his duties, and make the capital his principal residence. He was to preside in

[1] *Wanderings in the Great Forests of Borneo* p. 355.

the Courts of Law, with the reservation of right of appeal to the Rajah; to take the Rajah's place in the Supreme and General Councils, when the Rajah was not present or unable to preside; the direction of out-station affairs was to be placed in his hands; he was to conduct all office routine as the Rajah had done; and he was entitled to use the Rajah's flag and the yellow umbrella. The Rajah retained the initiative control over the Treasury, Military, Naval, Police, and Public Works Departments, and he made it known that in advancing the Rajah Muda to a position in which he might share his labours and to which he considered him to be entitled, he did not lay down any of the rights or powers invested in himself as Rajah.

Since this, the Rajah has divided his time between Sarawak and England, spending the summer months in the former country, chiefly on his yacht, visiting every corner of it, and the winter months in the latter, where he passes his time in hunting, a sport to which he is devoted. During his absence from Sarawak the Government is administered by the Rajah Muda.

Sarawak continued to be a haven for those seeking to escape from the shackles of oppression. We have already recorded in Chapter XIII. how many of the subjects of the Sultan of Bruni had taken refuge there; the people of the Natuna Islands have done the same. These beautiful islands are tributary to the Sultan of Rhio, and are under Dutch control, though nominally so only, for the Sultan appears to work his own will unchecked on the islanders through his agents, who are periodically sent to the islands with the sole object of gathering in what they can for the royal exchequer. Accompanied by a large force, the Sultan's heir, Rajah Ali, on one occasion, honoured the island with a visit, and found pretext to relieve the Datu of Sirhasan (one of the largest of these islands) of all his property, to the value of some $3000, and to annex his cocoa-nut grove containing 6000 palms. Even a gold watch and a telescope, given to the datu by the captain of a shipwrecked steamer as a return for his hospitality to crew and passengers, were not spared. A few years previously the same datu had been similarly

plundered. If such were the treatment meted out to the chiefs, the lot of the common people may well be supposed to have been hopeless. They had none to complain to but the Rajah, and he could help them in no other way than by reporting their grievances to the Dutch authorities, who did nothing. Any attempt on their part to lay their complaints before the Resident at Rhio would have been frustrated, and would have met with cruel chastisement.

We have little more of public interest to record concerning the history of the Raj and the lives of its Rajahs. The commercial and industrial progress is dealt with in a later chapter, and that will show the gradual development of the country to its present prosperous condition, and the achievement of an unique undertaking which has been carried into effect slowly, but surely and with determination.

We quote the following extract from Consul Keyser's report to the Foreign Office for 1899 :—

> This country (Sarawak) makes no sensational advances in its progress. Reference to statistics, however, will prove that this progress is sure, if slow, and each year adds money to the Treasury in addition to the main work of extending a civilisation so gradual that it comes without friction to the people. It is because the ruler of the country regards his position as a trust held by him for the benefit of the inhabitants that this progress is necessarily slow, since sudden jumps from the methods of the past to the up-to-dateism of modern ideas, though advantageous to the pocket, and on paper attractive, are not always conductive to the happiness of the people when peremptorily translated. Yet all the time good work is being quietly done. Improvements are made and commerce pushed, wherever possible, without fuss or the elements of speculation.

The prosperity of the country has not been built up out of the great natural riches of a State such as that of the Malayan peninsula, backed by Imperial support, nor with the aid of the capital and credit of a chartered company, but has followed in the train of a hard and single-handed struggle to convert a desolated country into one happy and contented, and it has succeeded so far as to place Sarawak foremost amongst the Bornean States in commercial wealth.

We have shown how this has been achieved, and "if it is owing to Sir James Brooke that Sarawak is now a civilised

state, his nephew, the present Rajah, has the high merit of having completed and extended that work, following out the humane and liberal views of his uncle. The name of Brooke will always have an honoured place in the history of the development of civilisation in the Far East." [1]

We will give in the Rajah's own words his views as to the form of government best adapted to the nature and requirements of an oriental people, written in 1901 :—

To keep such people in order a just and impartial rule, in which both rulers and ruled alike do their portion of work, is required. Like all Easterns they need a government simply formed and tutored by experience gained in the country itself, experienced in the manners and methods of the people, devoted to their welfare and interests, an indigenous product of the country which it governs, untroubled by agents or officials sent from outside, who, partly owing to want of reciprocal feeling and sympathy with the people, partly through ignorance, and partly through adherence to impracticable laws are liable to make such fatal mistakes in their dealings with Easterns which naturally leads to discontent, and even to rebellion.

The success this policy has met with is borne out by the testimony of Sir W. Gifford Palgrave, the Arabian scholar and traveller, and Mr. Alleyne Ireland, as well as by that of many others whom we have already quoted.

The former, when British Minister at Bangkok, visited Sarawak in 1882, and subsequently wrote to the Rajah :—

It is a pleasure to me to think that I shall be able to bear personal witness, when in England, to the success of your administration, which by its justice, firmness and prudence seems to me to work up better towards that almost utopian climax of "the greatest happiness to the greatest numbers" than any Eastern government (white or brown) that I have yet seen.

Mr. Alleyne Ireland was sent out from the United States by the University of Chicago to study British and other Tropical Colonies and to report thereon. A preliminary report was published in 1905, under the title of *The Far Eastern Tropics*. After commenting severely on the mistaken methods adopted in the Philppines by the U.S.A., he turned to Sarawak, where a method in all points the reverse had

[1] Beccari, *op. cit.* 260, 359.

been steadily pursued under the two Rajahs. This is what he says :—

For the last two months (written in January 1903) I have been in Sarawak, travelling up and down the coast, and into the interior, and working in Kuching, the capital. At the end of it, I find myself unable to express the high opinion I have formed of the administration of the country without a fear that I shall lay myself open to the charge of exaggeration. With such knowledge of administrative systems in the tropics as may be gained by actual observation in almost every part of the British Empire, except the African Colonies, I can say that in no country which I have ever visited are there to be observed so many signs of a wide and generous rule, such abundant indications of good government as are to be seen on every hand in Sarawak.

And again :—

The impression of the country which I carry away with me is that of a land full of contentment and prosperity, a land in which neither the native nor the white man has pushed his views of life to the logical conclusion, but where each has been willing to yield to the other something of his extreme convictions. There has been here a tacit understanding on both sides that those qualities which alone can insure the *permanence* of good government in the State are to be found in the White Man and not in the Native; and the final control remains therefore in European hands, although every opportunity is taken of consulting the natives and of benefiting by their intimate knowledge of the country and its people.

The wise and essential policy of granting the natives through their chiefs a part in the administration of the Government and in its deliberations, and in the selection of these chiefs of regarding the voice of the people, has always been maintained. Sympathy between the ruled and the rulers has been the guiding feature of the Rajah's policy, and this has led to the singular smoothness with which the wheels of the Government run. It must always exist, as it has ever existed, and still exists. That the country belongs to the natives must never be forgotten, and the people on their part will never forget that they owe their independence solely through the single-hearted endeavours of their white Rajahs on their behalf.

"The real strength of the Government," writes the Rajah, "lies in the native element, and depends upon it, though many Europeans

may hold different views, especially those with a limited experience of the East. The unbiased native opinion, Malay and Dayak, concerning matters relating to the country is simply invaluable."

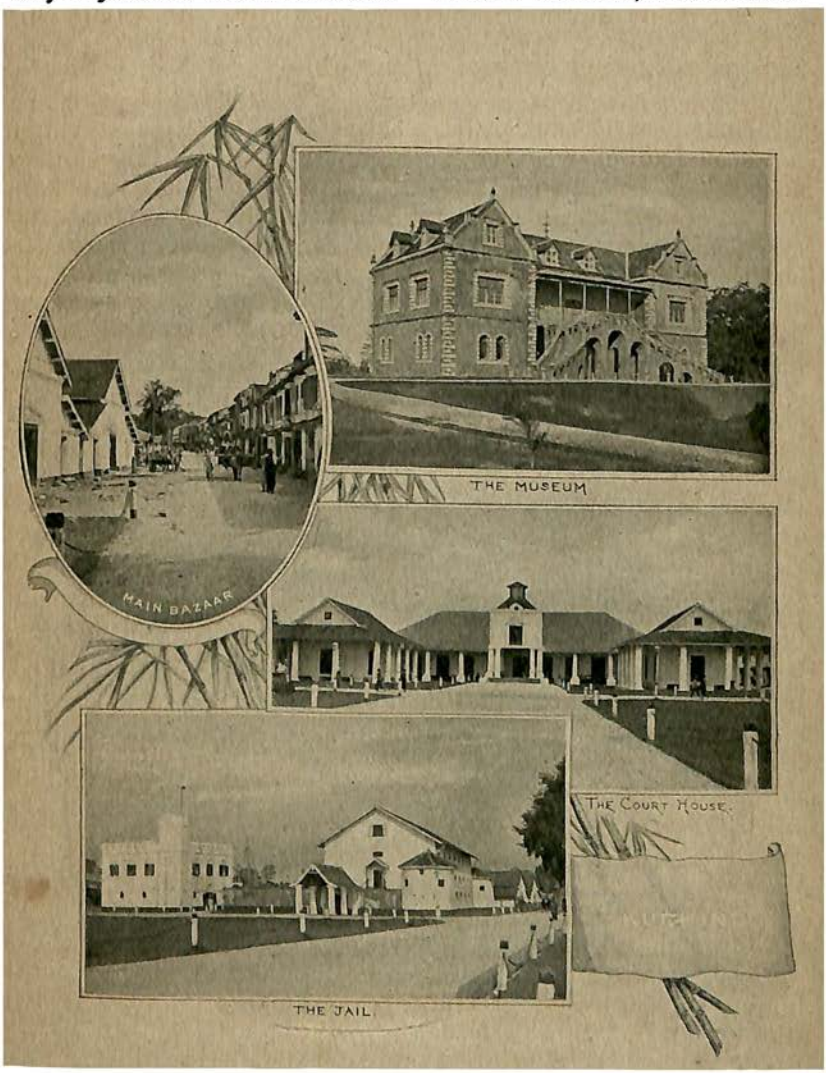
All with a true knowledge of natives, to whom his remarks may be said to apply generally, as well as to the Malays, will agree with Sir Frank Swettenham :—

That when you take the Malay, Sultan, Haji, chief, or simple village head-man into your confidence, when you consult him on all questions affecting his country, you can carry him with you, secure his keen interest and co-operation, and he will travel quite as fast as is expedient along the path of progress. If, however, he is neglected and ignored, he will resent treatment to which he is not accustomed, and which he is conscious is undeserved. If such a mistake were ever made (and the Malay is not a person who is always asserting himself, airing grievances, and clamouring for rights) it would be found that the administration had gone too fast, had left the Malay behind, left him discontented, perhaps offended, and that would mean trouble and many years of effort to set matters right again.[1]

Sir Frank Swettenham pays a high tribute to the Malays of rank of the Malay Peninsula, quite as justly have those of Sarawak earned the same praise. Foremost amongst these latter stood the old Datu Patinggi Ali, the champion of his people's cause, before the deliverer from oppression came in the person of the late Rajah, in whose service he gallantly sacrificed his life. Of a different type was his eldest son, the Datu Bandar Muhammad Lana, whose courage was masked by a gentle and retiring disposition, though it flashed forth on many occasions, notably at the time of the Chinese rebellion. His brother, who succeeded him on his death, the late Datu Bandar Haji Bua Hasan, previously the Datu Imaum, was one of the most trustworthy and faithful chiefs the Government has had. By his long and faithful service of over fifty years he had won the most honoured place amongst those chiefs who so nobly assisted the two Rajahs in their work in laying the foundation of law, order, and civilisation in Sarawak. He was held in esteem and respect by all people, and his dignified and familiar figure is greatly missed. He died on October 6, 1906, over one hundred years of age, another example of

[1] *British Malaya*, 1907.

longevity of life amongst Malays. As his descendants number exactly one hundred and fifty, the continuity of old Rajah Jarom's line is ensured. Two of his sons, Muhammad



Kasim and Muhammad Ali, are now respectively the Datu Bandar and the Datu Hakim. The third son of Datu Patinggi Ali, Haji Muhammad Aim, became the Datu Imaum in 1877. He died in 1898, justly loved by all for

his kindly nature and strict probity; no truer or more courteous gentleman could be found.

Of another family and of a very different type was the bluff old Datu Temanggong Mersal, with the reputation of having been a pirate in the bad old days, but who had "a fine spirit of chivalry which made up for a hundred faults."[1] He was a stout and staunch servant. Of him the late Rajah, referring to the Datu's Court, humorously wrote:—

> The old Temanggong is likewise a judge in Israel, and sometimes he breaks into the Court, upsets the gravity of all present by laying down *his* law for a quarter of an hour—Krising and hanging, flogging and fining all offenders, past, present or future, and after creating a strong impression vanishes for a month or two.

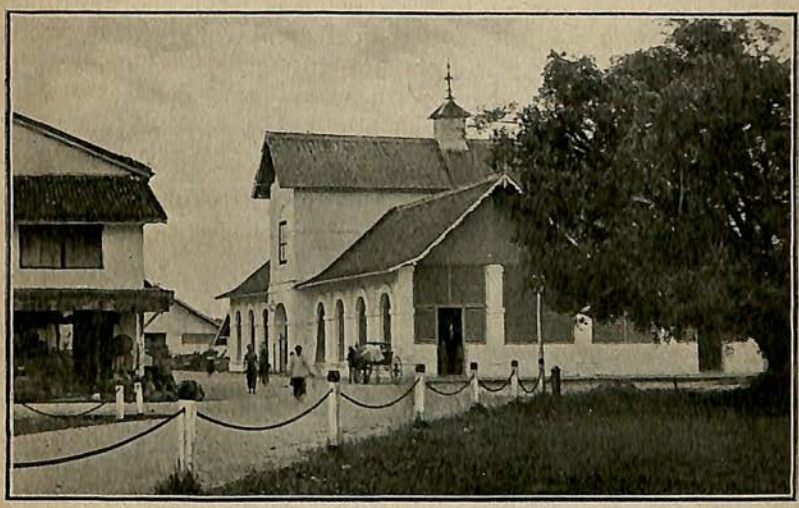
Absolutely fearless as himself were his sons Abang Pata and Muhammad Hasan. How the former distinguished himself we have already noticed. On the death of his father in 1863 the latter succeeded him as Datu Temanggong. He was a tall, handsome man of a distinct Arab type. Though a good Muhammadan, he was the least bigoted of a broad-minded class, and owing to his liking for their society he was probably the most popular with Europeans of all the datus, and at their club he was a constant and welcome guest. He died on the haj at Mecca in October, 1883.

Other native officials, whose names will ever live in the annals of Sarawak, are some who served in the outstations, and these have been already noticed. The qualities which distinguished these men, and which brought them to the fore, were grit, sound common-sense and fearlessness, and upon their shoulders fell the hardest task of managing the Sea-Dayaks and other interior tribes, a task fraught with danger and discomfort, and one that gave them little rest, but which they shared with their white leaders faithfully and without a murmur.

Sarawak has been exceptionally fortunate in having been able to draw upon a good class of men capable of supplying the State with servants fitted by intelligence and rank to become native officers. Though, *autre temps, autre mœurs*, the type is changing, yet the people generally are

[1] S. St John, *Forests in the Far East.*

jealous of their country, and honour its traditions. Contented, they seek no change, and they are ready to uphold their Rajah and to maintain their independence as vigorously now as they have done in the past—an independence which Lord John Russell had many years ago graciously intimated they were at liberty to achieve and maintain as far as it lay in their power; though he declined to hold out a helping hand. These are wholesome and promising indications that good



THE GENERAL MARKET, KUCHING.

men will always be found worthy to take the places which their forefathers so nobly filled.

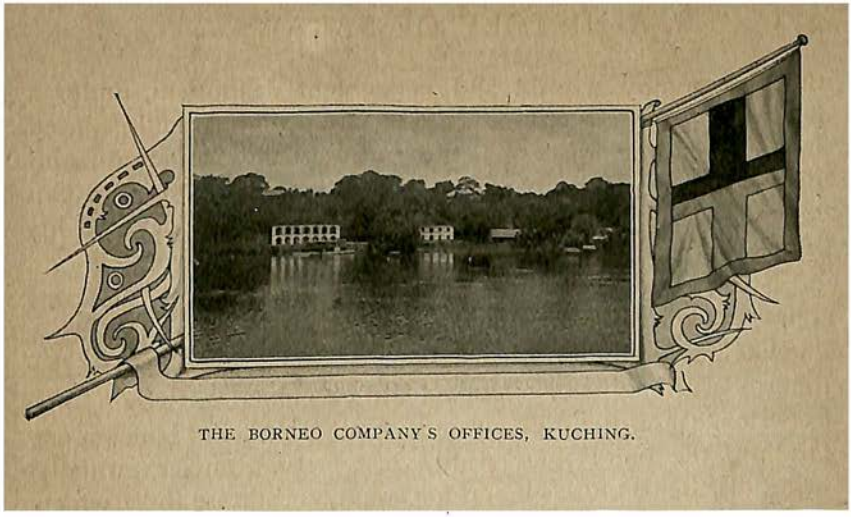
Sarawak owes its prosperity, and the people their rights and liberty, to the Brookes, and to the Brookes alone. Equality between high and low, rich and poor, undisturbed rights over property, freedom from the bonds of slavery and from harsh and cruel laws are blessings which but for the Brookes in all probability would have been denied them for many more weary years of desolating tyranny.

In a country like Sarawak, peopled by Easterns of so great a diversity of races, customs and ideas, an union of the people for their common weal is an impossibility. For them the best and only practical form of government is that which

they now enjoy, a mild and benevolent despotism, under a Ruler of a superior and exotic race, standing firm and isolated amidst racial jealousies, as no native Ruler could do, and unsuspected of racial partiality; a Ruler upon whom all can depend as a common friend, and a Ruler who has devoted his life to their common welfare.

Strength of character and integrity of purpose, tact and courage, firmness and compassion, combined with a thorough knowledge, not only of their languages and customs, but of the innermost thoughts of his people, to be gained only by a long experience, are qualities without which a despotic Ruler must fall into the hands of the strongest faction, and, eventually bring disaster on himself and his country; but are those which have enabled the Rajah to tide over many political troubles, to consolidate the many and diverse interests of his people, and to guide the State to its present position of prosperity and content.

CHESTERTON HOUSE, CIRENCESTER.
The Rajah's residence in England.



THE BORNEO COMPANY'S OFFICES, KUCHING.

CHAPTER XVI

FINANCE—TRADE—INDUSTRIES

A GENERAL review of the financial, commercial, and industrial progress of Sarawak will probably convey to our readers a better conception than the foregoing history may have enabled them to form of the uniform advance of Sarawak along the path of civilisation: for no better evidence of the prosperity of a country can be advanced than the growth of its trade and industries, dependent as this is upon security to life and property and liberal laws.

Of the revenue before the Chinese rebellion there are no records, as all the archives were then destroyed. Three years later, in 1860, the revenue was so insignificant as to be quite inadequate to meet the needs of the country, which then for the first time became involved in debt; a debt which was unavoidably increased in subsequent years, until it had reached a somewhat high figure for such a young and striving State, but from which, however, it has now been

freed by the exercise of prudent economy, and by improvement in its finances.[1]

In 1870 the revenue amounted to		And the expenditure to
	$122,842	$126,161
1880 . .	229,718	203,583
1890 . .	413,113	362,779
1900 . .	915,966	901,172
1907 . .	1,441,195	1,359,274

On January 1st, 1908, the Government balances amounted to a little over $800,000, and the only liability was for notes in circulation, amounting to $190,796.

In 1875, fifty-six years after its foundation, the revenue of Singapore was but $967,235, and that of Penang, then established for eighty-nine years, $453,029.[2] In 1900, the Raj of Sarawak had been in existence for fifty-eight years. Since 1875, the effect of the development of the rich tin deposits of the Malayan States of the Peninsula has been to so enormously enchance the commercial prosperity of the Straits Settlements that the present revenues of the "sister colonies" have quite surpassed anything that Sarawak may perhaps hope to acquire in a corresponding number of years.

The trade is mainly in the hands of the Chinese merchants, mostly country born, who are successfully carrying on thriving businesses of which the foundations were laid by their fathers in the early days of the raj. These merchants are of a highly respectable class, and they take the interest of intelligent men in the welfare of the country, which they have come to regard as their own. They rarely visit China—some not at all. They are consulted by the Government in all matters in which their interests are concerned.

The only European Firm is the Borneo Company Limited, and the career of this Company has for over fifty years been so closely linked with that of the State, and so much to the advantage of the latter, that it fully merits

[1] From 1876 the finances of the State were in the able hands of Mr. Charles S. Pearse (who joined in 1875), until 1898, when he retired. This most important post has since been well filled by the present Treasurer, Mr. F. H. Dallas.

[2] These figures are taken, being the only ones at hand.

more than a passing notice in these pages, without which this history would not be complete.

For a considerable period Mr. J. C. Templer, the late Rajah's old friend, laboured very hard to meet the ignorant and cruel criticism which had been cast on the Rajah's great work, and, in order that the development of Sarawak might have financial support, he interested friends in the city in the matter, chiefly Mr. Robert Henderson of Messrs. R. and J. Henderson.

After considerable negotiation, the Borneo Company Limited was registered in May, 1856. The attention of the Company was turned primarily to supporting the Rajah, and to developing the resources of the country. The first Directors were Messrs. Robert Henderson (Chairman), J. C. Templer, J. D. Nicol, John Smith, Francis Richardson and John Harvey (Managing Director).

Most unfortunately, immediately after the formation of the Company troubles arose which nearly overwhelmed the State. The Chinese insurrection the next year, and the later political intrigues obscured for a time the prosperity of Sarawak, and left the prospects of the Company very black indeed, but it struggled on bravely; and it cannot be doubted that its formation before the insurrection was a matter of great value in the history of the country.

The Company, as soon as they received news of the insurrection, instructed their Manager in Singapore to supply the Rajah with all the arms, ammunition, and stores he might require, and it was their steamer, named after himself, that arrived at such an opportune moment, and enabled him to drive the rebels out of Kuching, and to cut short their work of ruin far sooner than he could otherwise have done; and it was the Company which not only subsequently advanced the Rajah the means he so sorely needed to carry on the government, but headed a subscription list started in England to relieve the Government of pressing wants, with a donation of £1000. Long before this the Rajah's private fortune had been exhausted.

Some appear to have formed the opinion that the Company were subsequently inconsiderate in pressing for

payment of the loan, but more consideration should have been given to the position of the Directors as being a fiduciary one to the shareholders, who had invested their money in a commercial enterprise, and at that time by no means a prosperous one.

Since the Company was formed over £200,000 has been paid to the Government for mining royalties, and during the same period £2,000,000 has been paid out in wages, which has tended to the prosperity and advantage of the country.

Until 1898, no balance of profit had been made by the Company from Sarawak; indeed, there was a very considerable deficit, which had been met from the profits of their other operations.[1] This persistence in the original policy of the founders of the Company for forty years without return has, however, been rewarded by considerable success in the last decade. The enterprise that brought this success, the extraction of gold from poor grade ores by the cyanide process, is noticed further on, and we will conclude this notice of the Company by a quotation from a speech by the Rajah given thirty years after the foundation of the raj.

> The Company has held fast and stuck to its work through the perils and dangers and the adversity which Sarawak has experienced and encountered. It has shown a solid and stolid example to other merchants, and has formed a basis for mercantile operations; and the importance of the presence in a new State of such a large and influential body as the Borneo Company cannot be overrated.

Owing to the absolute lack of security to life and property, both within and without, before the accession of Sir James Brooke to the raj, Sarawak had no trade. After 1842 a small trade began to spring up, but the Lanun and Balenini pirates and the Sea-Dayaks rendered the pursuit of trade very difficult and dangerous. The lessons administered to the latter by the Rajah and Sir Henry Keppel caused these to confine themselves for some time to their homes, and the Foreign exports rose to $60,000 in 1847. Then the coast again became insecure,

[1] The Borneo Company have branches at Batavia, Singapore, and in Siam; formerly also in China and India. The head office is in London.

and it was not until after the battle of Beting Maru, in 1849, that trade made any considerable advance, and it continued to increase until the Chinese insurrection brought the country to the verge of ruin. A brief respite followed, and then came the internal political troubles, and renewed activity on the part of the Lanun and Balenini pirates. But in 1862, the authority of the Rajah was paramount from Cape Datu to Kedurong Point, and the defeat of the pirates off Bintulu in the middle of this year freed the Sarawak coast for ever from these pests. So in 1862 the increase in the value of the trade was over fifty per cent. In 1860, the Foreign imports and exports amounted to $574,097; in 1880 to $2,284,495; in 1900 to $9,065,715; and in 1905 to $13,422,267. Since 1905, in common with all countries, the State has been suffering from commercial depression, and in 1907 the decrease in the imports was $709,162, and in the exports $823,682, compared with 1905, though only $2276 and $166,285 as compared with 1906. But though the exports have fallen off in value, there has been an increase in the quantities of the products exported. As prices fluctuate, the industrial progress of a country is, therefore, better guaged by the quantity rather than by the value of its products, and in 1907, 7000 tons more sago flour, 800 tons more pepper, 7000 oz. more gold, and 150 tons more gutta and india-rubber were exported than in 1905.

Practically Singapore has the benefit of the whole of the Sarawak trade, which is borne in two steamers of 900 tons each under the Sarawak flag, owned by the Sarawak and Singapore S.S. Company, and these maintain a weekly communication between Kuching and Singapore. The coasting trade is carried in three smaller steamers owned by the same Company. There is a small trade in timber with Hong Kong; and a few junks come yearly from Siam and Cochin China.

Agriculture is the foremost industry, and as it is a permanent one, only requiring wise and liberal measures to foster and encourage it, Sarawak is in this respect fortunate, for the natural products of a country, such as minerals and

jungle produce, must in time be worked out; and the future of a country is therefore more dependent upon its industries than on its natural products.

In 1907, the value of the cultivated products exported was $3,133,565. Of these sago may be said to be the staple product, and the markets of the world are mainly supplied by Sarawak with this commodity. From it Borneo derives its Eastern name, Pulo-Ka-lamanta-an (the island of raw sago).[1] The palm, the pith of which is the raw or crude sago, is indigenous, and there are many varieties growing wild all over the island that yield excellent sago. On the low, marshy banks of the rivers, lying between Kalaka and Kedurong Point, are miles upon miles of what might be termed jungles of the cultivated palm, where fifty years ago there were but patchy plantations. The raw sago as extracted by the Melanaus is purchased by the Chinese and shipped to the sago factories in Kuching, where it is converted into sago flour, in which form it is exported to Singapore. How the cultivation of the sago palm is increasing, the following figures will show:—

1870	exported	[2]	tons,	value	$128,025
1887	„	8,734	„	„	314,536
1897	„	14,330	„	„	689,702
1907	„	20,388	„	„	964,266

In 1847-48, only 2,000 tons were imported into Singapore, practically all from Borneo.

In times immemorial pepper was very extensively cultivated in Borneo. In the middle ages this cultivation attracted particular attention to the island; and to obtain a control over the pepper trade by depriving the Turks of their control over the trade in spices was one of the main incentives to the discovery of a route to the East by the Cape. By many the introduction of pepper into Borneo is attributed to the Chinese, and from them the natives are supposed to have learnt its cultivation, but this is doubtful, as pepper is not a product of China, and was probably introduced by the Hindus; but that the Chinese, finding the

[1] Chap. I. page 1.

[2] Quantity not given in published trade returns.

industry a profitable one, improved and extended the cultivation of pepper, there can be no doubt. What the export of pepper was in the days when the Malayan Sultanates were at their prime it is impossible to determine, but that it must have been very considerable is indicated by the fact that as late as 1809 Hunt estimated the export from Bruni at 3500 tons, and at that time the country had been brought to the verge of ruin by misrule and oppression, which led to the gradual extinction of the Chinese colony, and to the deprival of all incentive to the Muruts and Bisayas to carry on an industry for which they had once been famous—indeed, Hunt notices that he saw *numbers of abandoned gardens*, and his observations were restricted to a very limited area. In spite of the harmful restrictions of the Dutch, in the south at Banjermasin, two hundred years ago, the export was still from 2000 to 3000 tons.[1] Had different conditions prevailed, had native industry been encouraged instead of having been suppressed, then truly might Borneo have become the "Insula Bonæ Fortunæ" of Ptolemy.

But Sarawak is placing Borneo once more to the fore amongst the pepper producing countries of the far East, and in 1907 exported 5177 tons, as against 400 tons in 1886. After many previous failures the foundations of this large industry, which is entirely in the hands of the Chinese, were laid in 1876 by the Rajah in conjunction with certain local Chinese merchants.

As with sago and pepper, Borneo is essentially a rubber producing country, and it is to be hoped when the time arrives, and as yet it appears to be far from being in view, that the natural product is worked out, it will be more than replaced by cultivated rubber. The Borneo Company have laid out extensive plantations, that give promise of a paying and lasting industry.

With the exception of the cultivation of sago, agriculture in Sarawak is, and will remain dependent upon imported labour. It is not in the nature of the Malay, whose wants are so few and simple that they are procured by a minimum of exertion, to undertake any work requiring persistent and

[1] Captain Beeckman, *op. cit.*

diligent labour; and no more is it in the nature of the Sea-Dayak, though he is not afraid of hard work. Having finished his farming and gathered his harvest the latter prefers an occupation that, whilst bringing in a fair profit, will gratify his proneness for roaming. The native methods of rice growing are crude and wasteful, and attempts to improve these have failed, as have all attempts to introduce Chinese for the purpose of cultivating rice, with the idea of establishing an agricultural industry for which there is so much room and need in Sarawak. The Malays and Dayaks, like the Kayans and Melanaus, produce barely enough rice for their own consumption, and rice figures as the biggest item in the imports of a country which is capable of producing a considerable quantity more than it needs.

Sugar cane grows well, but enterprise in its production has probably been damped by the failure, through mismanagement, of an English Company, which, in 1864, started a large plantation on about the very worst soil that could have been selected. Tobacco planting proved to be a failure, and a costly experiment to the Government. Coffee and tea grow well on high ground, but the country has little elevated plateau land suitable for its cultivation. Gambir is a paying product, but the cultivation of pepper has proved more attractive to the Chinese, though the production of gambir has been fairly well maintained at over 1000 tons yearly. Tapioca, cotton (which in former days was largely exported from Bruni), the cocoa-nut, the areca or pinang, and the oil or soap palms all grow well. Ramie is being cultivated by an English Company in the Lawas, and experiments have shown that this plant will grow well. The sisal aloe grows freely, and on poor soil. Pine-apples are largely cultivated for canning. The fruits and vegetables common to all countries in the Malayan Archipelago abound in Sarawak.

The land regulations are liberal and fair. *Bona fide* planters receive every encouragement, though none is held out to speculators in land. The indiscriminate alienation of large tracts of land for unlimited periods and for indefinite purposes is an unsound policy, which does not find favour in Sarawak. It leads to land being locked up, sometimes

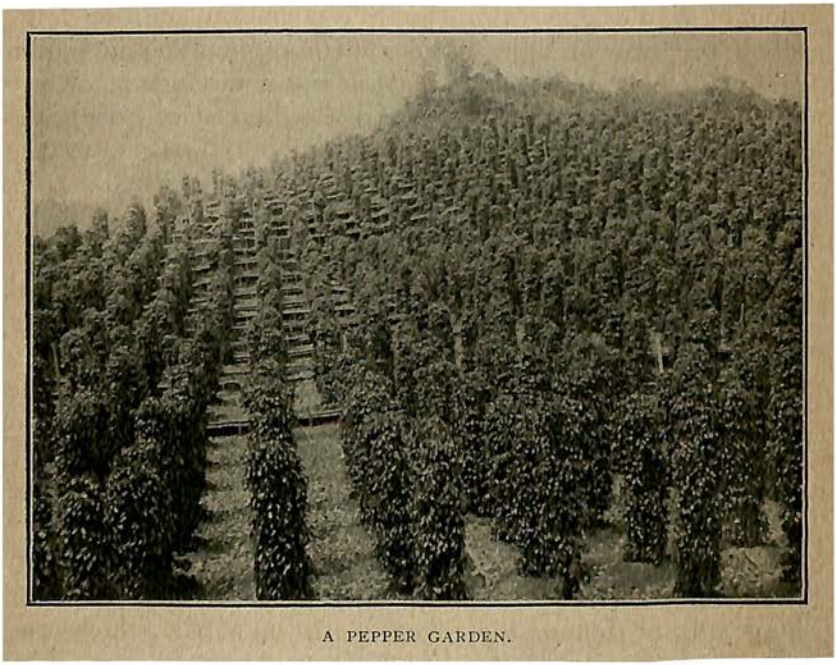
for a long period, and to placing ultimately in the hands of a foreign speculator profits which the State should reap, and to the natives it causes many hardships. In 1890, such a concession was granted to a company by the Dutch Government in the province of Sambas, quite independently of any consideration for existing and long-established rights of the natives, the real owners of the soil. This act drove many families over the borders into Sarawak, when rudely awakened to the fact that except by the permission of the employees of a company, only to be obtained by payment, they could not farm, neither could they fish or hunt, nor could they obtain the many necessities of life with which the jungle supplies them.

In his report upon Borneo for 1899, Mr. Consul Keyser writes :—

> I should here like to dispel, once and for all, the idea so often heard suggested that the Ruler of Sarawak is averse to progress and the introduction of European capital. That the Rajah is anxious to discourage that undesirable class of adventurer, who descends upon undeveloped countries to fill his own purse regardless of the result, it is true. The fate of the adjacent country of Bruni, whose ruin and decay are not entirely disconnected with the unfulfilled promises and specious tales of selfish speculators, is in itself ample justification, if one were needed, for this attitude.
>
> At the same time, no *bona fide* investor need fear to visit Sarawak if he is prepared to deal fairly with the natives and conform to the usages of the country. Such a man would be sure of welcome, and he himself equally certain of success.

Land is usually granted at a small rental in large or small areas, in accordance with the capital and the objects of the grantee. The proportion of the land which is to be brought under cultivation in successive years is agreed upon. Any portion of the land that the grantee may have failed to bring under cultivation within the stipulated time, or, having cultivated, has abandoned it, reverts to the State; though in the former case circumstances occasionally arise which justify some latitude to the planter. But all land brought under cultivation becomes the absolute property of a planter or his assigns, and remains so, *as long as it is maintained under cultivation.* Abandonment of a plantation

is abandonment of the land, and it then reverts to the State; and the State thus remains the real owner of the land, though not of the plantation on it. This system is obviously of advantage to the planter. He obtains his land, which he may select where he chooses, for next to nothing, and he runs no risk of losing capital sunk in the purchase of what might prove to be an unprofitable property, and therefore one that is unsaleable. And it secures to the State a



A PEPPER GARDEN.

sufficient guarantee that the land will be cultivated and kept under proper cultivation. Practically the whole of the Chinese pepper and gambir planters hold their land under these terms, and they are as secure in the possession of their gardens, and the right to alienate them, as if they had bought the land. Land is sold only for special purposes, such as for buildings and gardens in a town or its suburbs.

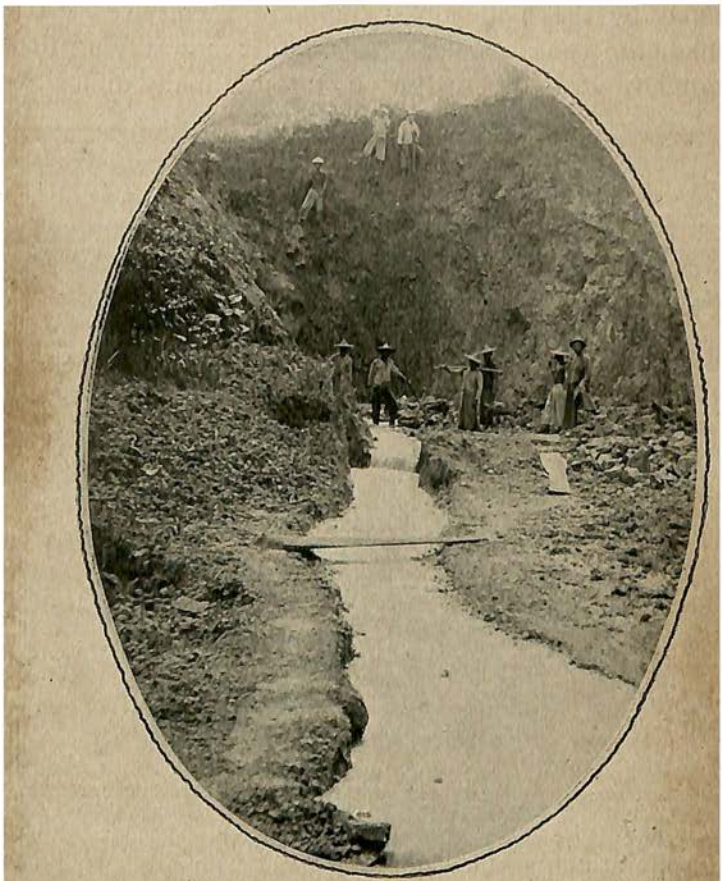
Jungle produce, in spite of seemingly natural predictions that it must soon be worked out, which have been yearly repeated for many years past, figures yet as a very important item in the export trade, and its collection not only remains

a considerable industry, but is apparently still a growing one. The exports have risen in value from $267,480 in 1877 to $1,626,427 in 1907, which is just double that of ten years previously. The products are, in the order of their value, gutta, india-rubber, cutch, rattans, timber and barks, edible birds'-nests, camphor, and beeswax.

The supposed mineral wealth of Sarawak first brought it into notice. It was known to produce gold and diamonds, though so did other Bornean States, but in addition antimony ore was brought to the Singapore market in native prahus from Sarawak, and that was not a production of any other part of Borneo. It excited the interest of Europeans as well as the cupidity of the Bruni Rajahs, but to the former, Sarawak was not a safe place with which to trade, and the latter soon drove its people into rebellion by forced labour at the antimony mines, and the supply then ceased. After the accession of the late Rajah this natural product was nationalised and became the main source of revenue, but subsequently, with all other minerals, excepting gold, it was leased to the Borneo Company. Since the days of large production in Sarawak, antimony has been worked in many other countries, and this has sent the value down, so that it is only very occasionally that the price of antimony in consuming markets will admit of any export of the metal. The large deposits that previously existed have apparently been exhausted, but fresh rich deposits may still be found, though, as with cinnabar, which was once largely worked by the Company at one place, the discovery of these isolated pockets is greatly a matter of chance. Antimony has been found in many other parts of the State, though not yet in paying quantities, and cinnabar has been found here and there on the gravel shallows of rivers, an indication of the existence, though not a sufficient one to point to the position of other lodes.

It was entirely owing to the first Rajah that the Chinese had been able to settle on the gold-fields in Upper Sarawak and to establish a large and profitable mining industry; and it was entirely owing to their own supreme folly and ingratitude that that industry was destroyed. It was revived

again after a time, but never to the extent of what it had been. As the visible outcrops of gold gave out, the Chinese turned their attention to the more profitable occupation of pepper-planting, and, ten years ago, the mining district of

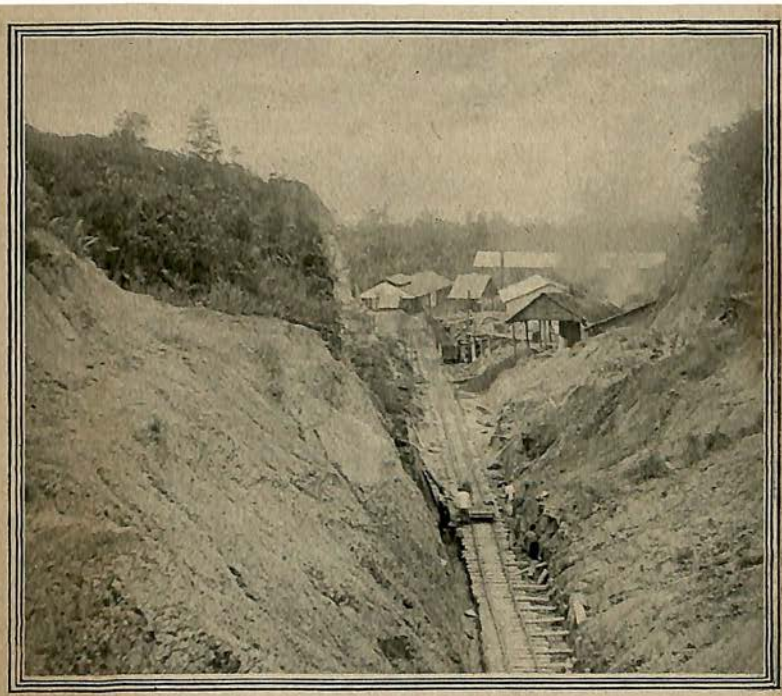


CHINESE SLUICING FOR GOLD.

Upper Sarawak had been changed into an agricultural one—gold-mining had almost ceased, the cinnabar mines at Tegora had long been worked out, and but little antimony was mined, whilst pepper gardens had sprung up everywhere.

The Borneo Company had from time to time spent considerable sums on experimental work on the gold deposits, but, owing to the character of the ore, no method of working

was found practicable on a mercantile scale until the discovery of the cyanide process. But even treatment by cyanide in any way then used was not found successful with Sarawak ore, and the method ultimately adopted was formulated by the Company's engineers themselves. The result has been considerable success, and it is gratifying that after so many years of steady work through many difficulties



BROOKETON COAL MINES.

and disappointments, the Company have been able to place on a prosperous footing an industry which has brought them good fortune, and which is proving to be of so great advantage to the country.

Sarawak possesses extensive coal-fields, and anthracite and steam and cannel-coal have been found throughout the country; but so far coal has been mined only at Semunjan in the Sadong river.[1] This colliery has been worked for many years by the Government. The coal is of good steaming

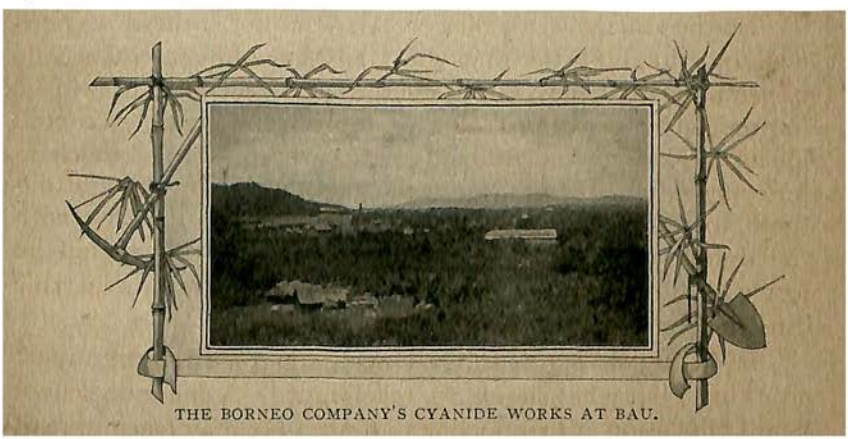
[1] The Brooketon Colliery leased to the Sarawak Government is in Bruni territory. In Chap. XV. will be found a full account of this mine.

quality, leaving little ash, and there is plenty of it. Like the Brooketon Mine, this mine would pay if a market could be found for the coal. The average yearly output is now about 20,000 tons, a little more than sufficient to supply local steamers. At Selantik, up the Lingga river, very extensive coal seams have been proved; but to work these a large outlay would have to be incurred in the construction of a long railway over the swampy land lying between the Selantik hill and the nearest place in the river where steamers could load.

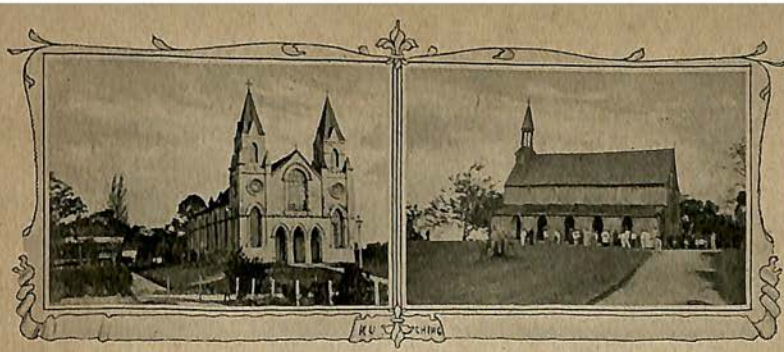
Diamonds are found in the upper reaches of the Sarawak river, and these are brilliant and of good water; the largest known to have been found is seventy-two carats, and was named "The Star of Sarawak." Diamonds have never been sought for in a systematic manner.

Iron ore abounds; and, as has already been noticed, it is smelted by the Kayans and Kenyahs for the manufacture of weapons and tools.

Sarawak has no mechanical industries of importance or capable of much development. Many Melanaus are able carpenters, boatbuilders, and blacksmiths. Amongst Malays are to be found some good shipbuilders and coppersmiths, and a few fairly skilful as silver and goldsmiths, but almost all the skilled labour is in the hands of the Chinese. In such domestic arts as weaving cotton and silk cloths, and plaiting mats, baskets, and hats, the native women are expert, and produce very excellent work.



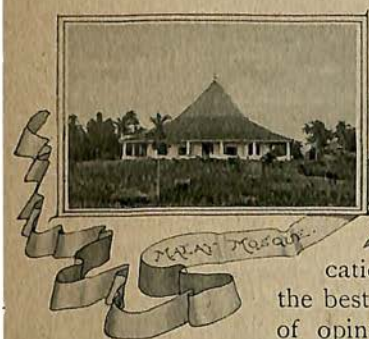
THE BORNEO COMPANY'S CYANIDE WORKS AT BAU.



ST. JOSEPH'S CHURCH (R.C.) ST. THOMAS' DIOCESAN CHURCH (S.P. G.)

CHAPTER XVII

EDUCATION — RELIGION — MISSIONS



ANY changes of opinion must take place upon the subject of the education of natives before it is exhausted and the best way of teaching found, and such changes of opinion and the improvements in methods which follow in their train can only be the result of experience, or of conclusions drawn from successful or unsuccessful experiments.

So the Rajah wrote thirty years ago, but hitherto experience has taught little that gives any encouragement to the expectation that the present condition of the natives will be improved by any form of education based upon accepted ideals. Though the difficulty lies perhaps not so much in knowing what or how to teach the natives, but in getting them to come to be taught; especially is this the case with the dominant Sea-Dayak race, a fact which should not be lost sight of in considering how missionary efforts in this direction have met with such small success.

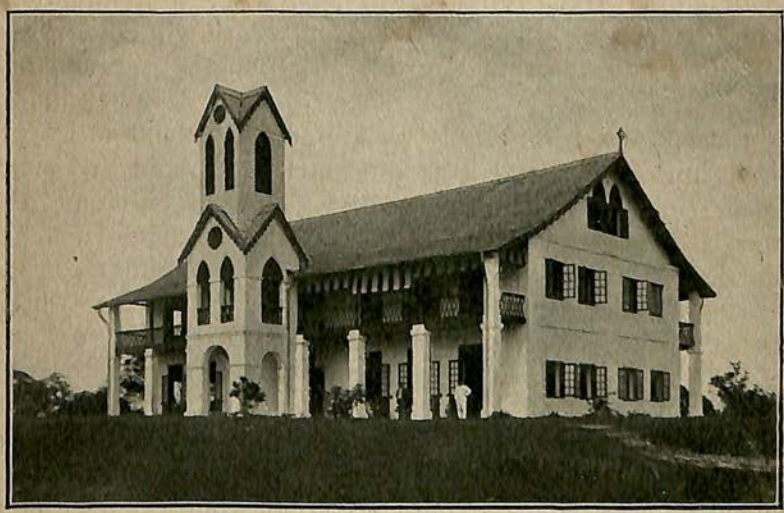
If he *would* learn, a Sea-Dayak could be taught almost anything; but what should we teach him? A common school board education is of no value to him. He may learn to read

and write; and gain a little rudimentary knowledge utterly useless to him after leaving school, and therefore soon to be forgotten. If he is placed in one of the larger schools in Kuching he will there receive impressions and imbibe ideas which may render a return to his old surroundings distasteful to him, and unfit him for the ordinary life and occupations of his people. He will be left with one opportunity of gaining a living—he may become a clerk, though the demand for clerks is limited; but if he is successful in obtaining a clerkship he will be beset with temptations which he will be unable to resist, and which will soon prove his ruin; and unfortunately this has been the rule and not the exception. There are some who advocate technical education, and who rightly point out that the Sea-Dayak would make an excellent artisan, though the same argument applies equally against the utility of such a training. He may become a clever carpenter or smith, but there would be few opportunities for him to benefit himself by his skill, for he could never compete with the Chinese artisan, into whose hands all the skilled labour has fallen.

But if elementary and technical education were to meet with all the success one could desire, that success would needs be exceedingly limited, for, though some good would be done, only a few could be benefited. A broader view must be taken, a view that has regard not to the improvement of a few only, but of the people generally, and how this can best be done is a question that has brought forth many and various opinions, all more or less impracticable.

The Sea-Dayak has all he wants. He is well off, contented, and happy. He is a sober man, and indulges in but few luxuries. He is hard-working and he is honest, but he lacks strength of mind, and is easily led astray. Therefore, the longer he is kept from the influences of civilisation the better it will be for him, for the good cannot be introduced without the bad. Perhaps the problem of his future will work out better by a natural process. When his present sources of supply fail him and necessity forces him into other grooves, then, and not before, will he take up other industries, which his natural adaptability will soon enable him to learn.

To learn how to read and write and a little simple arithmetic is as far on the path of education as the average Malay boy can reach; and perhaps it is far enough. There are two Government Schools in Kuching for Malays, which are fairly well attended, though attendance is not compulsory. For those who may desire an education of a higher class than can be obtained in these schools, those of the S.P.G. and the R.C. Missions are always open; and Malays, though Muhammadans, do not hesitate to attend these schools, and



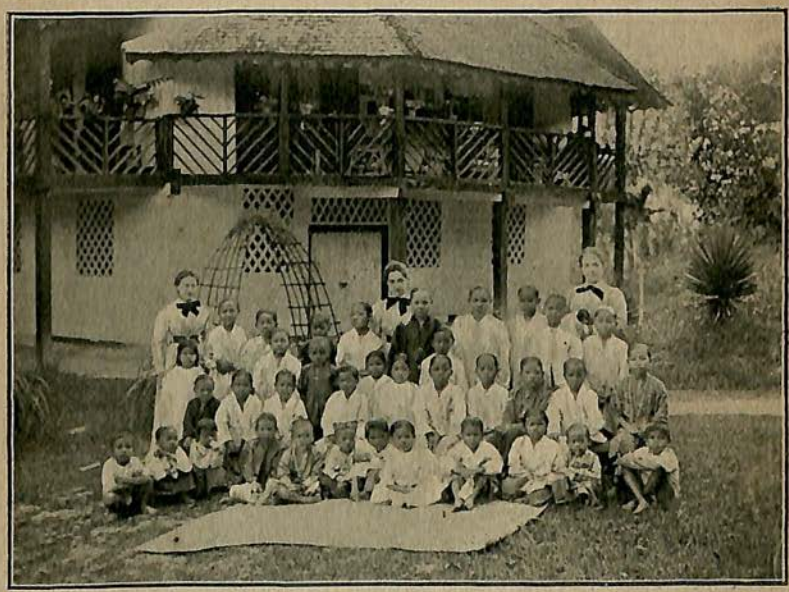
S.P.G. BOYS' SCHOOL.

even to be taught by the priests, for they know that no attempt will be made to proselytise them. They are encouraged to attend for their own good; they would be kept away if there was the faintest suspicion that it was for the sake of converting them. In Kuching, the Government has a third and larger school, the High School, entirely secular in character, which is open to boys of all races, who are taught by Chinese, Malay, and Indian schoolmasters, and this school is well attended.

The large S.P.G. Boys' School is under the management of an English headmaster, and the boys are well educated. The pupils are chiefly local Chinese, and there are

a few natives from the out-station missions. Old boys from this school are to be met with throughout the Malay Peninsula as well as in Sarawak, maintaining in positions of trust the credit their school has so justly gained. The S.P.G. Mission has also a Girls' School, conducted by two English Sisters, and here good work is also done.

Perhaps the largest school in Kuching is that belonging



S.P.G. GIRLS' SCHOOL.

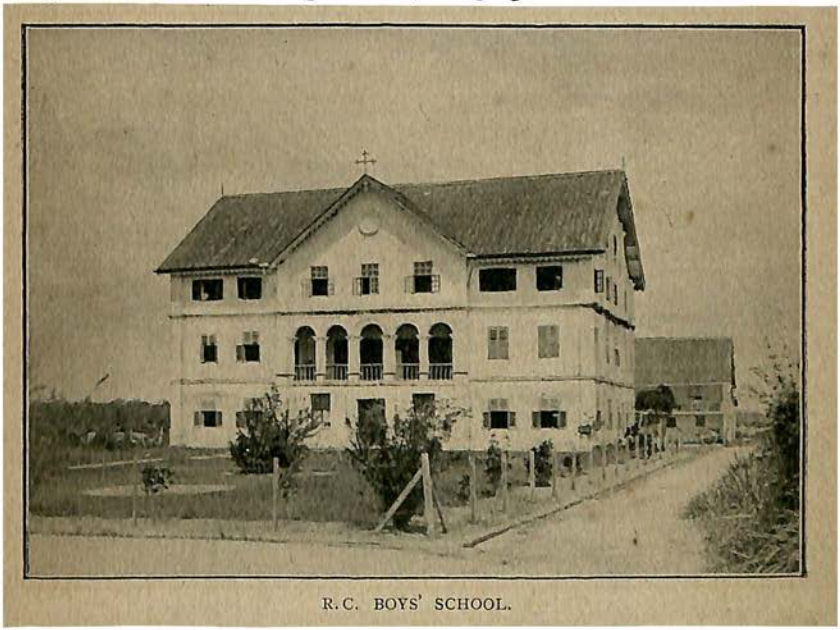
to the R.C. Mission, which is very ably conducted by the priests. As in the S.P.G. School, the pupils are chiefly Chinese boys. Attached to the Convent is a Girls' School under the control of the Mother Superior and four Sisters.

In the provinces, the S.P.G. Mission has schools at five different places, but only two are now under the control of priests: the R.C. Mission has the same number of Boys' Schools, all under the control of priests, besides three convents where girls are taught. The Methodist Episcopal Mission has a school at Sibu. All these schools receive State aid. Chinese have their own little schools scattered about, for which they receive small grants, and in Upper Sarawak

there are two Government Chinese Schools. Efforts to start schools amongst the provincial Malays have not met with success; they have their own little village schools conducted by hajis, in which the teaching of the Koran is the main curriculum.

Writing in 1866, the present Rajah says:—

Twenty years ago, the Sarawak population had little religion of any sort, and the first step towards bringing it to notice was when the



R.C. BOYS' SCHOOL.

English mission was established. The Christian Church gave rise to a Muhammadan mosque. Subsequent years of prosperity have enabled the Malays to receive instruction from the Mecca School. Those who are too old, or to much involved in the business of the country to go on the haj, send annual sums to the religious authorities there; but at the present time I feel sure there is no fanaticism among the inhabitants, and, excepting some doubtful points instilled into them in their education at Mecca, their religion is wholesome and happy. To the building of the mosque very few would come forward to subscribe.[1]

Forty years ago the pilgrimage to Mecca was a costly and a hazardous venture. The sufferings that pilgrims for months had to undergo on ill-found, overcrowded, and

[1] *Ten Years in Sarawak.*

insanitary sailing ships, and the dangers to which they were exposed on the overland journey from Jedah to Mecca and back, were such that only fervent Muhammadans would face, and few Malays are such. Not many had the means to undertake a journey which would take the best part of a year to perform, as well as to satisfy the insatiable extortions to which they were subjected from the moment they set their feet in Arabia. Now, the welfare of the Muhammadan pilgrim is so well safeguarded by Christian ordinances, that his voyage to Jedah and back to Singapore presents to him but a pleasurable and interesting trip, on which his wife and daughters may accompany him with safety and moderate comfort. Steamers have taken the place of sailing ships, and competition has made the fares cheap. At Jedah the Malay pilgrim is under the protection of his Consul, and, beyond, the influence of a Great Power will protect him at least as far as his life and liberty are concerned, but he will suffer the common lot of all pilgrims, and be subjected to exactions of every kind, returning to Jedah with empty pockets.

Though, owing to the facility with which the pilgrimage can now be made, hundreds yearly go to Mecca and are brought into close contact with the bigotry of western Muhammadans, yet the Malay remains as he was, with an almost total absence of religious fervour. A sure sign of indifference to their religion in the majority of Malays and Melanaus is found in the mean, dilapidated buildings which are dignified by the name of mosques, to be seen in most of the towns and villages along the coast. Kuching practically owes its fine mosque to the benevolence of one man, the late Datu Bandar. There are some devout Muhammadans amongst the Malays, though not many, but there are no bigots. Some content themselves with a loose adherence to outward observances; many do not even do this, and not many attend the mosques for worship, but, however, all would be united in bitter opposition to any intermeddling with their religion.

The remnants of a former paganism still cling to the Malay, who is certainly more superstitious than he is religious. He still strongly believes in spirits, witchcraft, and magic—a belief his religion condemns; he will practise sorcery, and

will use spells and charms to propitiate, or to ward off the evil influence of spirits—practices which his religion forbids.[1]

Toleration and a deficiency of zeal have made the Malays indifferent propagators of their faith amongst the pagan tribes around them; and the field has been left open to Christian missionaries, whose work of conversion they look upon with unconcern, so long as no attempt is made to convert a Muhammadan, and to do that is not allowed by the law of Sarawak. Their feeling towards the Christian religion is one of respect. They admit Christians readily to their mosques, and will attend church on the occasion of a marriage or a funeral in which they may be interested, and they will converse freely with Christians upon religious subjects, without assuming or pretending to any superiority in their own religion.

Mischievous and clever Arab impostors, usually good-looking men with a dignified bearing, meet with short shrift in Sarawak, and such holy men are very promptly moved on. The heads of the Muhammadan religion will have none of them. Their ostensible object is to teach, but their sole one is to make what they can by trading upon the superstition of the simple-minded. In these men the Dutch see fanatical emissaries sent from Mecca to preach a jihad or holy war, and have more than once warned the Government that such men had gone to Sarawak for this purpose. They may be right, but these pseudo Sherifs and Sayids[2] have never attempted to do so in Sarawak, it would be a waste of their time, and be the ruin of their business.

The Sea-Dayaks, as well as the Land-Dayaks, and those tribes inhabiting the interior are alike pagans, and possess but a dim and vague belief in certain mythical beings who, between them, made man and gave him life. These gods are styled Batara or Patara and Jewata—Sanskrit names introduced by the Hindus.[3] With them mythical legends, which vary greatly, take the place of religion. They have

[1] At Sibu, a few years ago, during an epidemic of cholera, medicines given to the Malays were smeared on the posts of their houses to hinder the evil spirits, that were supposed to be spreading the disease, gaining access to the houses by climbing up the posts; and windows were rigidly closed to prevent their entry.

[2] Two such impostors, who had commenced to reap a rich harvest at Bintulu, when pulled up short by the Resident, inadvertently answered a question put to them in English, and subsequently admitted that they had served as stokers on English steamers.

[3] Chap. II. p. 38, footnote 2.

no priests, no temples, and no worship. They believe in spirits with controlling power over the air, the earth, and the water, and they place implicit reliance on omens as given by birds, animals, and reptiles, and in dreams, through which the spirits convey warnings or encouragement in respect to the affairs they may be engaged upon, or contemplate undertaking. They have a belief in a future life, which will differ in little respect from their life on this earth. These people are not idolaters; their religion is animistic.

The project of the establishment of a Church of England Mission in Sarawak was started by the late Rajah in 1847. The Earl of Ellesmere and others interested themselves in the project, and, sufficient funds having been subscribed, the Rev. F. T. McDougall and two other missionaries were sent out, and arrived in Sarawak in June, 1848. The Church of St. Thomas, now the Diocesan Church, was completed and consecrated by the Bishop of Calcutta in 1851. Two years later the Mission was transferred to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel; and, in 1855, to complete the organisation of the Church in Borneo, Mr. McDougall was consecrated Bishop of Labuan and Sarawak. He resigned in 1867, and died in 1886. Mr. Chambers, who had for many years been a missionary in Sarawak, succeeded him, and on his resignation[1] the Venerable G. F. Hose, Archdeacon of Singapore, was consecrated Bishop in 1881, and the full designation of the diocese then became Singapore, Labuan, and Sarawak, by the inclusion of the Straits Settlements and the Federated Malay States.

The headquarters of the Mission is at Kuching, where the Bishop and the Archdeacon reside, the latter being also the Vicar of Kuching. The Mission Stations are at Lundu, Kuap, Banting, Sabu in the Undup, and Sebetan in the Kalaka, and at these places there are churches and schools. Hitherto all these stations, which were established many years ago, have been under the care of resident clergymen, but at present there are four vacancies. Attached to these principal Stations, and under the supervision of the missionary in charge, are many scattered chapels with native catechists and teachers.

[1] Bishop Chambers died in 1893.

In Kuching the work of the Mission lies chiefly amongst the Chinese. Kuap, which is within a day's journey of the capital, is a Land-Dayak village; the other Mission Stations are in districts populated by Sea-Dayaks, and the labours of the S.P.G. are chiefly confined to these people.

During the first six and a half years of Bishop Hose's episcopate, 1714 persons were baptized, and the number of native Christians had risen to 3480 in 1887.

For a full and interesting account of the work done by the Mission the reader is referred to *Two Hundred Years of the S.P.G.* (1701-1900).

That the Church in Borneo has done, and is still doing good, no one will dispute. It has not, however, extended its sphere of influence beyond its original limits, and within those limits, from Lundu to Kalaka, there is not only room, but the necessity for many more missionaries to labour than the Church is at present provided with. Missionary enterprise has not kept pace with the advance of civilisation. The large districts that since 1861 have reverted to the raj have been totally neglected by the S.P.G., and these districts, both in respect to area and population, constitute by far the greater part of Sarawak. But the Church in Sarawak is entirely dependent upon extraneous support, and when funds appear to be wanting, even to maintain the former efficient state of the Mission, and indications of retrogression are only too evident, there can be little hope for progression. A bishop cannot find missionaries, they must be sent to him, and he must be provided with the means to support them and their missions, and unless he is so far assisted he cannot be blamed for any shortcomings. To succeed, a mission, like other undertakings, must be based upon sound business principles. The isolated efforts of even the best men, men like Gomes,[1] Chambers,[2] Chalmers,[3] and Perham,[4] who have left their personal stamp upon the Mission, can be of little avail without continuity

[1] The Rev. W. H. Gomes, B.D. In Sarawak from 1853-68. Afterwards in Singapore to the time of his death in 1902.

[2] Who succeeded Bishop M'Dougall.

[3] Afterwards Bishop of Goulburn, N.S.W. He died November 1901.

[4] He became Archdeacon of Singapore, and retired some years ago. He is well known for his scholarly articles on the folk and mythical lore of the Sea-Dayaks.

of effort and purpose, and to insure this a system is necessary, a system of trained missionaries, training others to take their places in due time, and for want of such a system the S.P.G. is now left with but two English missionaries in Sarawak.

To the deep regret of all in his diocese, failing health and advancing years necessitated the retirement of Bishop Hose at the end of 1907, after having spent the best years of his life in faithful service to the Church in the East. As far back as 1868 he was appointed Colonial Chaplain at Malacca. He was transferred to Singapore in 1872, and was appointed Archdeacon in 1874. For a little over twenty-six years he had been Bishop of a diocese of unwieldy size, over 120,000 square miles, containing a population of about two and a quarter millions, the supervision of which, with the two Archdeaconries separated by 450 miles of sea, necessarily entails a great deal of hard work and a considerable amount of travelling, and by reason of this it is proposed shortly to subdivide the diocese.[1]

The great Spanish Jesuit, one of the founders of the Jesuit Society, St. Francisco Xavier, the Apostle of India and the Far East, in 1542 laid the foundations of a missionary enterprise that scarcely has a parallel. Earnest and self-denying priests followed in his footsteps, and eventually some reached Borneo. Of the work of the earlier missionaries in Borneo we know hardly anything, but, as with Xavier at Malacca, they probably met with little success. They wandered away into the jungles, there to end their days amongst savage and barbarous people, at whose hands we know some met with martyrdom. They have left no traces and no records behind them, even their names are perhaps forgotten.

Fr. Antonio Vintimiglia, already mentioned in chapter ii. established a Roman Catholic Mission at Bruni, where he died in 1691; there may have been others there before him, but evidently he was the last Roman Catholic priest for many years in that part of Borneo with which this history deals.

In 1857, a Roman Catholic Mission was again established

[1] This has since been done.

at Bruni, Labuan, and Gaya Bay, under a Spaniard named Cuateron, as Prefect Apostolic, who was assisted by two worthy Italian Priests. The romantic story of how Senor Cuateron became a priest, how he established the Mission, and how he obtained the means to do so, will be found in Sir Spenser St. John's *Life in the Forests of the Far East.* St. John tells us that the funds entrusted by Fr. Cuateron to the Papal Government as a permanent support for his Mission were diverted to other purposes, and the money he retained himself was dissipated in unsuccessful speculations. In 1861, nothing remained but closed churches and Fr. Cuateron. He remained for over fifteen years longer, and then he too disappeared.

In July, 1881, a Roman Catholic Mission to Borneo was founded in England, and attached to the foundation of this Mission there is also some romance, but of a different character to that which centred upon Fr. Cuateron. The Very Rev. Thomas Jackson, the first Vicar Apostolic, had so distinguished himself in the field in succouring the wounded during the last Afghan war as an acting Army chaplain, that he won a practical and well-deserved recognition from officers and men in the shape of a substantial testimonial, and this he devoted to the promotion of missionary work in Borneo. After travelling through North Borneo and Sarawak he selected Kuching as his headquarters. Supported by liberal aid from home, and well aided by zealous and self-devoted priests and sisters, before his retirement he had laid the foundations of a most flourishing mission. The Vicar Apostolic is now the Very Rev. E. Dunn, one of the first missionaries to join Mr. Jackson, and he, by his earnestness and kindliness, has won the respect of all. In Sarawak there are eleven European priests, two brothers, and eleven nuns and Sisters of Charity.

At Sibu, in the Rejang, there is an American Methodist Episcopal Mission under the charge of an American missionary. It was established in 1900, to look after the welfare of a number of Foo Chow Chinese agriculturists, who had been introduced from China and settled near Sibu, and who are all members of the American Methodist Church.

From every point of view, few countries offer such facilities and advantages for missionary work than are found in Sarawak. There is no spirit of antagonism to Christianity. Converts are exposed to no persecution, scorn, or even annoyance. By becoming Christians they do not lose caste, or the respect of their people. The lives and property of missionaries are absolutely safe wherever they may choose to settle, and, more, their coming will be welcomed. A man gifted with good sense and firmness, kindness of heart and courtesy, will soon make his influence felt, and gain, what is of paramount importance to the success of his undertaking, the respect of the people around him. Such a man will not fail to do a great deal of good, as such men have done before, but his labours will have been in vain unless there be another gifted with the same good qualities ready to take his place in due course.

CHINESE TEMPLE, KUCHING.

INDEX

Aban Jau, a troublesome Kayan chief, 342
Abdul Gani, Abang, 159
Abdul Gapur, Haji, becomes Datu Patinggi, 77, 78; his exactions, 208; intrigues with S. Masahor, *ib.*; his oppression and disloyalty, 209; is disgraced, *ib.*; his plot to murder the Rajah and his officers, 210; his open contempt, 211; is publicly degraded, *ib.*; is sent out of the country, 212; and banished, *ib.*; pardoned, 220; he intrigues again, *ib.*; the murder of Steele and Fox, 223; he dissembles, and is taken into confidence, 227; a deep plot, 231; his plan to seize Kuching, 232; the plot revealed, 233; he is again banished, *ib.*; his part in the plot, 235; is arrested by the Dutch, 237; his end, 242
Abdul Karim, Haji, becomes Datu Imaum, 77
Abdul Mumin, Sultan, *see* Mumin
Abdul Rahman, the Datu Patinggi of Serikei, 117, 208
Abi, the murderer of Steele, 225; his death, 226
Aborigines Protection Society take up the cause of pirates, 140
Abu Bakar, Juwatan, 364
Abu Bakar, Sherip, 117
Agriculture, 7; early efforts to promote, 320; present thriving condition, 429
Ahmit, Sherip, 117, 130
Aing, Abang, a distinguished native chief, 155; his wife, 156; is wounded, 176; the Chinese insurrection, 190
Ajar, Dang, 158; and Akam Nipa, 159
Akam Nipa, a famous Kayan chief, drives the Malays out of the Rejang, 16, 159; in revolt, 282, 289
Alderson, Baron, his speech at the London Tavern, 146
Alderson, Mr., 234
Ali, Abang, a Malay chief, 225, 226, 229, 230, 231
Ali, Datu Patinggi, the descendant of Rajah Jarom, 45; reinstated as Datu, 77; kills a Lanun Penglima, 80; his skirmish with the Saribas Dayaks, 100; his gallantry, 107; his death, 108; the champion of his people, 420
Amal, Sherip, 117
Ambong, destroyed by pirates, 95
American Methodist Episcopal Mission, 449
Amok by the Sea-Dayaks, 25; a bad case, *ib.*; by Malays, 30
Amzah, Nakoda, his account of the pirates, 275
Antu-Jalan, The, a myth, 15
Api, Rajah, usurps the throne of Bruni, 53; his execution, 54
Astana, The, 396
Atoh (Haji Abdul Rahman) outwits the pirates, 274

Bailey, D. J. S., 388, 389
Bain, Mr., murdered at Muka, 322
Bajau pirates, 92; associate with the Lanuns, 94. *See* also under Piracy
Bakar, *see* Abu Bakar
Balambangan, Island, Hon. East India Company's settlement, 43; destroyed by Datu Teting, *ib.*; re-established and abandoned, *ib.*
Balang, Sea-Dayak chief, 287; his execution, 320
Balenini pirates, 92; in league with Lanuns and the Sultan of Sulu, 95; their methods, *ib.*; cruising grounds, 96; strongholds, *ib.*; haunts, *ib.* *See* also under Piracy
Bampfylde, C. A., 388
Bandahara, Pangiran, heir to the Sultanate of Bruni, 347; loses his rights in the Limbang, 353; appointed regent, 367
Banjermasin, English and Dutch alternately at, 47, 48; the English driven out, 48; reverts to the Dutch, *ib.*
Bantam, 42, 47

Bantin, a rebel Sea-Dayak chief, 387, 388, 389, 390
Banyoks, The, origin, 15; supporters of S. Masahor, 223
Baram, in revolt against Brunei, 332, 335; relations with Brunei, 333; ceded to Sarawak, 335, 336, 339, 340, 341; order established, 341; Aban Jau, 342
Baring-Gould, J., 389
Bayang conspires with Datu Haji Abdul Gapur, 234
Beach, Sir, M., and the cession of Baram, 340
Beads, old, 37
Beccari, Signor Odoardo, on the Bornean forests, 7; on the natives, 14; the *Rafflesia Tuan Mudæ*, 21; old beads, 37; a levée at the Astana, 415; his appreciation of the first Rajah, 417
Beckman, Capt., his account of Banjermasin, 48, 431
Bedrudin, Pangiran, his family, 53; meets James Brooke, 70; at Brunei, 84; his character, 112; his return to Brunei, 113; his life in danger, 114; he defeats P. Usup, 116; his death, 119
Belait, *see* Tutong
Belcher, Capt. Sir Edward, R.N., sent to report on affairs in N.W. Borneo, 102; his ship ashore, *ib.*; proceeds to Brunei, *ib.*; his report, *ib.*; at Patusan, 108; takes R. M. Hasim and his family to Brunei, 113
Bencoolen, 46, 47
Bethune, Capt., R.N., commissioned to select a site for a British settlement, 113
Beting Maru, battle of, 136
Betong fort built, 178; attacked, 179
Bisayas, The, 20
Bliuns, The, 12
Bondriot, J., 148
Borneo, description, 1-5; origin of name, 1; its jungles, 8; known to the Arabs in ancient days, 36; early Chinese settlements, 36, 37, 38; early Hindu settlements, 21, 38; the Empire of Majapahit, 21, 38, 39, 40; Sultanates established by Malays, 40; the Insula Bonæ Fortunæ of Ptolemy, 40; the Spanish and Portuguese, 40; the Dutch and English, 42; ancient Chinese trade, 44; the English and Dutch in the south, 47
Borneo Co., Ltd., their steamer disperses the Chinese rebels, 198; early difficulties, 243; its history, 426; ultimate success, 437
Brassey, Lord, in favour of the transfer of N. Borneo to Sarawak, 412
Brereton, W., at Sekrang, 139, 155, 156; his fight with Rentap, 157, 163; his death, 166
British North Borneo Company, established, 411; transfer Lawas to Sarawak, 362; proposed transfer of N. Borneo to Sarawak, 412
Brooke, Bertram W. D., the Tuan Muda, 405
Brooke, Charles (child of the second Rajah), his birth, 400; his death, 401
Brooke, Charles Anthoni, second Rajah of Sarawak. Tuan Muda, 1852-1868. On the Chinese, 31; first visit to Sarawak, 104; on the Batang Lupar expedition, *ib.*; at the attack on S. Usman's stronghold, 116; on board the *Mæander*, 130; joins the Rajah, 153; birthplace and parents, 154; retires from the Navy—his naval services, 154; becomes Tuan Muda, *ib.*; is appointed to Lundu, 155; at Lingga, 158; the Dandi expedition, 161; the Lang expedition, 163; in charge of the Batang Lupar district, 166; his position and difficulties, *ib.*; his expedition against the Kajulau Dayaks, 167; receives news of the Chinese rebellion, 171; goes to the Rajah's assistance, *ib.*; after Saji, 172; first expedition against Sadok, 173; a failure, 176; the return, 177; attacks Saji, 178; builds a fort in the Saribas, *ib.*; second Sadok expedition, 179; another failure, 182; third Sadok expedition, 183; success, 184; the Chinese troublesome, 190; to Kuching to suppress the Chinese rebellion, 198; the rebels driven over the border, 199; is sent to Muka, 214; saves the survivors of S. Masahor's massacre, 215; S. Masahor fined and deposed, *ib.*; fort built at Serikei, 218; left in charge of the country at a critical time, 220; makes a tour through the country, *ib.*; is uneasy about Kanowit, 221; more troubles at Muka, *ib.*; the Sarawak flag fired upon, 222; he arranges matters there, *ib.*; enforces payment of a fine for insulting the flag, *ib.*; the Sultan irritated by his conduct, 223; the Consul-General supports the Sultan, *ib.*; he receives news of the murder of Steele and Fox, *ib.*; the situation and disposition of the people, *ib.*; he assembles the chiefs at Kuching, 225; his resolution, *ib.*; punishment of the murderers at Serikei, 226; he meets the S. Masahor, 227; the attack on Kabah, 228; the stockade taken, 230;

an intricate plot, 235 ; he takes action, 236 ; advances against Sadong, 237 ; his encounter with S. Masahor, *ib.* ; he attacks the Sherip, 238 ; Bandar Kasim punished, 239 ; he proceeds to Sekrang, 240 ; further action against S. Masahor—Igan burnt, *ib.* ; repression of the plots—thanks of the Rajah, 241 ; is opposed to foreign protection, 243 ; his actions criticised by Gov. Edwardes, 247 ; the attack on Muka, 250 ; Gov. Edwardes' interference, 256 ; he removes the coast people to Lingga, 259 ; builds a new fort at Kanowit, 260 ; is thanked by the Rajah for his success at Sadok, 265 ; his overland journey, *ib.* ; he visits England, *ib.* ; he returns to Sarawak, 281 ; assumes the name of Brooke, *ib.* ; the Kayan expedition, *ib.* ; the start, 284 ; his boat swamped, 288 ; the return, 292 ; installed as Administrator in 1863, 294, 296 ; the commencement of his rule, 301 ; the Rajah's trust in him, 304 ; the task before him, *ib.* ; his main principle of government, 305

Rajah from 1868

His accession, 307 ; his pledges to the people, *ib.* ; his administration, 308 ; the Datu Bandar's testimony, *ib.* ; his opinions on governing natives, and his policy, 313, 315, 418-420 ; the success of his policy, 315 ; how the abolition of slavery was effected, 315-318 ; his conduct of business, 319 ; liquidation of the public debt, 319 ; his efforts to promote agriculture, 320 ; punitive expeditions, 1862-1870, 320 ; he leaves for England, 325 ; his marriage, *ib.* ; his letter to Lord Clarendon on Bruni, 329 ; he visits Bruni and concludes a treaty, 331 ; he visits Baram, 332 ; his letter to the Foreign Office on Bruni, 335 ; his recommendations to the Foreign Office—adopted too late, 337 ; negotiations for the acquisition of the Baram, 339 ; false accusation of intimidating the Sultan, 340 ; the cession of the Baram sanctioned by the Foreign Office, *ib.* ; he visits Bruni—Baram ceded to Sarawak, 341 ; Trusan ceded, 344 ; the Sultan appeals to him (the Rajah) for help against the Limbangs, 348 ; he declines to interfere, 348, 410 ; the Sultan resents his refusal, 349 ; he is asked to take over the Limbang, 350 ; the murder of P. Japar, *ib.* ; he annexes the Limbang—his reasons for doing so, 352 ; the Sultan admits he has no real grievance against him, 354 ; Sir Spencer St. John's opinion of the annexation of the Limbang, 354, 355 ; he acquires the coal mines and certain rights in the Muara district, 357 ; his improvements at Brooketon, 358 ; the expedition against O. K. Lawai, 359 ; a design to hand Bruni over to him, *ib.* ; he is begged by the chiefs to annex Tutong and Belait, 361 ; he is reconciled to the Sultan, 364 ; the Sultan willing to accept his offer to take over Bruni, 364 ; his influence at Bruni, 366, 367 ; his rights in Brooketon infringed, 368, 369, 370 ; the four periods of his labours, 373 ; punitive expeditions, 378, 381, 383, 384, 387 ; is complimented by the Resident of Netherlands, Borneo, 384 ; his last expedition, 389 ; his return with the Ranee to Sarawak, 393 ; their reception, 394 ; the Astana, 396 ; their first children, 400 ; they visit Pontianak and Batavia, *ib.* ; they leave for England—death of their children, 401 ; he is created a Commander of the Crown of Italy—Grand Officer, 401 ; birth of the Rajah Muda, *ib.* ; Lord Derby's compliment, *ib.* ; Lord Grey's interest in Sarawak, 402 ; he returns to Sarawak, *ib.* ; difficulties presented by intertribal feuds, 401-404 ; birth of the Tuan Muda, 405 ; his narrow escape from drowning, *ib.* ; birth of the Tuan Bongsu, *ib.* ; visits England to confer with the Foreign Office with regard to Limbang and Bruni, 406 ; British protection granted—terms of the agreement, *ib.* ; the advance of the State without extraneous aid, 407-409 ; he is created a G.C.M.G., 410 ; the salute to be accorded him by H.M.'s ships, *ib.* ; he annexes the Limbang, *ib.* ; he proclaims the Rajah Muda as his successor, 411 ; his offer to take over British North Borneo, 412 ; Keppel's opinion of him, 413 ; he intrusts the Rajah Muda with a share of his duties, 415 ; Consul Keyser's and Signor Beccari's testimony, 417 ; Sir W. G. Palgrave's and Alleyne Ireland's testimony, 418 ; what the people owe to the Brookes, 423 ; the Rajah as a despotic Ruler, 424 ; his reputed adverseness to the introduction of European enterprise denied, 433 ; the Rajah on education, 439 ; on the Muhammadan religion, 443

Brooke, Charles Vyner, Rajah Muda, his

birth, 401 ; with the expedition against the Muruts, 359 ; leads an expedition against Bantin, 389 ; is proclaimed the Rajah's successor, 411 ; joins the Rajah's staff, 415 ; is given a share in the Rajah's powers, *ib.* ; administers the Govt. in the Rajah's absence, 416
Brooke, Ghita, her birth, 400 ; death, 401
Brooke, Harry Keppel, 405
Brooke, James, Rajah of Sarawak, his description of a Dayak village, 27 ; on the character of the Malay, 28 ; on the decadence of Malayan States, 44 ; on the policy of the Dutch, 51 ; his birth, and early life, 61 ; death of his father, 62 ; he purchases the *Royalist*, and sails for the East, *ib.* ; first visit to Sarawak, 63 ; first meeting with Rajah Muda Hasim, 65 ; he warns P. Makota against the Dutch, 66 ; leaves Kuching and visits Sadong, *ib.* ; a brush with the Saribas Dayaks, 67 ; sails for Singapore, *ib.* ; receives an address of thanks at Singapore—the Governor's coolness, *ib.* ; he visits the Celebes, 68 ; his second visit to Sarawak, *ib.* ; is pressed by R. M. Hasim to remain there, *ib.* ; he consents to assist against the rebels, 69 ; is offered the raj, *ib.* ; his first meeting with P. Bedrudin, 70 ; he suppresses the rebellion, *ib.* ; his investiture as Rajah delayed, 71 ; he accepts an equivocal arrangement, *ib.* ; purchases the *Swift*, *ib.* ; R. M. Hasim's dishonesty and coolness, *ib.* ; an attempt to involve him with the Dutch, *ib.* ; P. Makota's plot, *ib.* ; he frustrates it, 72 ; R. M. Hasim's procrastination, *ib.* ; the people offer him their allegiance, 73 ; P. Makota resorts to poison, *ib.* ; the downfall of Makota, *ib.* ; he becomes Rajah, *ib.* ; the condition of the country, 73-77 ; he releases the Sibiawan hostages—recalls the Sarawak Malays—reinstates the Datus, 77 ; he institutes a Court of Justice and promulgates a code, 78 ; his first year's work, 79 ; steps to safeguard the country, *ib.* ; the Saribas Dayaks and S. Sahap receive lessons, 80 ; execution of pirates and head-hunters, *ib.* ; his first visit to Bruni, *ib.* ; grant of Sarawak confirmed, 85 ; shipwrecked sailors released, *ib.* ; his return and public instalment, *ib.* ; he banishes P. Makota, 86 ; he reforms the govt., 87 ; his policy, *ib.* ; his three great objects, 88 ; Keppel's testimony, 89 ; his meeting with Capt. Keppel, 90 ; with the *Dido*, 97 ; action off Sirhasan, 98 ; his welcome at Kuching, *ib.* ; with Keppel against the Saribas, 100 ; the Padi chiefs admonished, 101 ; submission of the Dayaks and the Sherips, *ib.* ; Sir Edward Belcher arrives to report, 102 ; with Belcher to Bruni—Sarawak granted in perpetuity, *ib.* ; he goes to Singapore—his mother's death, 103 ; joins an expedition against Sumatran pirates—is wounded, *ib.* ; purchases the *Julia*, *ib.* ; S. Sahap's depredations *ib.* ; arrival of the *Dido*—the expedition against the Batang Lupar, 104-109 ; submission of the Saribas and Sekrang, 109 ; lack of support of the British Govt.—the revival of piracy, *ib.* ; he offers Sarawak to the Crown—his precarious position, 110 ; R. M. Hasim in the way, 112 ; he goes to Bruni, 113 ; is appointed H.M.'s confidential agent, *ib.* ; a letter from the Foreign Office a surprise to the Bruni Court, *ib.* ; he interests Sir Thomas Cochrane in Bornean affairs, 114 ; R. M. Hasim and his brothers in danger, *ib.* ; his determination to support them, 115 ; the Admiral's action at Bruni—P. Usup's discomfiture, *ib.* ; S. Usman's stronghold destroyed, 116 ; P. Usup's death, *ib.* ; prosperity of Sarawak—his desire for protection, *ib.* ; a rising of the Sekrangs incited by the Sherips suppressed, 117 ; Rejang affairs, *ib.* ; intrigues at Bruni against the Sultan Muda Hasim, *ib.* ; the murders of Hasim and his brothers, 119 ; P. Bedrudin's farewell message to the Rajah, *ib.* ; his opinion of Bedrudin, 121 ; with the fleet off Bruni, *ib.* ; Bruni attacked—the Sultan a fugitive, 122 ; the Rajah forms a provisional govt. at Bruni—Admiral Cochrane's regret, 123 ; with Cochrane and Mundy against the pirates, *ib.* ; his return to Bruni—the Sultan's submission, 124 ; Sarawak granted unconditionally, *ib.*, 125 ; he returns to Kuching with the survivors of Hasim's family, 124 ; his independent position as Rajah, 125 ; the occupation of Labuan, 126 ; the jealousy of the Dutch, *ib.* ; Dutch pretensions, 127 ; at Penang, 128 ; he concludes a treaty with Bruni, *ib.* ; action with Balenini pirates, *ib.* ; he visits England, 129 ; honours bestowed on him, *ib.* ; becomes Governor of Labuan, Commissioner, and Consul-General, and is created a K.C.B., 130 ;

his return to Sarawak, *ib.*; is joined by Capt. James Brooke-Johnson, *ib.*; he gives a flag to his country, 131; establishes Labuan, and visits Sulu, *ib.*; is left with inadequate means to face the pirates, *ib.*; is defied by the Saribas and Sekrangs, 132; they ravage the coast, *ib.*; he attacks the Saribas, 134; he visits Labuan and Sulu, and concludes a commercial treaty with Sulu, 135; the great expedition, *ib.*; the battle of Beting Maru, 136; his life attempted by Linggir, 137; the Dayaks of the Saribas and Rejang attacked, 138; a fort built at Sekrang, *ib.*; submission of the Dayaks, 139; he is persecuted in England, *ib.*; the action of his discarded agent, Wise, *ib.*; the malignity of his accusers, 140; Hume moves an address to her Majesty—supported by Cobden, *ib.*; the motion opposed by Henry Drummond and lost, 141; Cobden's speech, *ib.*; Hume's motion for a Royal Commission negatived, *ib.*; Gladstone's attitude, 140, 141; Lord Palmerston denounces the charges, 141; his actions approved by the British Govt., 142; a commentary on Cobden's assertions, *ib.*; the Rajah removes Bandar Kasim, 143; he proceeds to Siam on a diplomatic mission, *ib.*, 296; recognition by the United States, and complimentary letter from the President, 144; the Rajah leaves for England, *ib.*; the bitter hostility of the Radicals, *ib.*; a commission of inquiry granted, *ib.*; the great dinner at the London Tavern—the Rajah's speech, 145; he returns to Sarawak—is attacked by small-pox, 147; the Commission sits in Singapore, *ib.*; the findings of the Commissioners, 148; further assistance refused the Rajah, 149; Gladstone's later attack, 150; Earl Grey's reply, *ib.*; England the worst opponent of Sarawak, 152; the Rajah is joined by his nephew, C. A. Johnson, 153; he visits Bruni—a further cession of territory, 159; the Dandi expedition, 161; the Sungei Lang expedition, 163; the Rajah's advice to the Tuan Muda, 166; he disregards warnings, 191; his house attacked by the Chinese—his escape, *ib.*; he endeavours to organise a force—he retires to Samarahan, 195; his return, 197; he is again forced to retire, 198; he returns in the *Sir James Brooke*, and drives out the rebels, *ib.*; he pursues them, 199; English indifference—Dutch assistance, 201; the country impoverished—devotion of the natives, 202; the difficulties faced, 203; the Datu Patinggi Gapur gives trouble, and plots with S. Masahor, 208; Gapur reprimanded, 209; the Rajah is menaced by Gapur, 210; he disgraces him, 211; he visits Bruni—the government placed in his hands, 216; he restores the old executive system—and is pressed to reside at Bruni, 217; the Sultan fails him, *ib.*; he governs the Rejang for the Sultan, 218; his intervention at Muka, 219; he visits England, *ib.*; his opinion of P. Makota, *ib.*; he commends the Tuan Muda, 241; his opinion of England's attitude, *ib.*; in England, 242; is stricken with paralysis, *ib.*; his efforts to obtain protection from England, *ib.*; from Holland, *ib.*; from France, 243; he is opposed by his nephews, and gives way, *ib.*; pecuniary troubles, *ib.*; Miss Burdett-Coutts' assistance, *ib.*; a public testimonial—he purchases Burrator, 244; is obliged to return to Sarawak, 245, 261; he visits Bruni, 261; he goes to Oya, *ib.*; prepares to assume the offensive against Muka, 262; establishes order at Muka, 263; his last visit to Bruni, *ib.*; obtains a further acquisition of territory, *ib.*; he retires to Burrator, 265; receives the news of the fall of Sadok—his warm thanks to the Tuan Muda, *ib.*; his opinion of Admiralty orders in respect to pirates, 269; his last visit to Sarawak, 279; the defection of the Rajah Muda, *ib.*; negotiations for transfer of Sarawak to Belgium fall through, 280; Sarawak recognised by Great Britain as an independent State, *ib.*; his farewell to Sarawak, 294; his hopes fulfilled—his last years clouded, 295; his policy and its effects, 296; a parallel case—Sir S. Raffles, 297; the Rajah's larger policy abandoned, *ib.*; his dreams of extended usefulness, 298; his anxiety that England should adopt Sarawak, *ib.*; is worried as to the future, 301; his life at Burrator, 302; his death, 303; his will, *ib.*; Dr. A. R. Wallace's tribute to his memory, *ib.*; the Rajah's trust in his successor, 304; his main principles of government, 305; a noble record, *ib.*; the policy he advocated in regard to Malayan States, 338; Beccari's appreciation, 417

Brooke, James (child of the present Rajah), his birth, 400; his death, 401
Brooke, James Brooke, Rajah Muda, joins his uncle, the Rajah, 130; becomes the Tuan Besar, 131; left in charge of the raj, 144; on the Lang-river expedition, 163; leads an expedition up the Saribas, and against Sadok, 179; in charge of the government, 219; loses his wife, and goes to England, 220; returns to Sarawak, 241; is opposed to foreign protection, 243; attempts peaceful measures at Muka, 249; he attacks Muka, 250; Governor Edwardes' unwarrantable interference, 256; he is forced to withdraw, 257; he receives the thanks of Lord John Russell, 257; is made Rajah Muda, 265; death of his second wife, 269; his action with the pirates, *ib.*; his retirement, 279; his death, 281
Brooke, Thomas, father of the first Rajah, 61, 62
Brooketon, the coal mines—the Rajah's rights, 357; development of the mines, 358; the Rajah's losses, 368; an oppressive tax, *ib.*; an infringement of rights, 369; comments by the *Straits Budget*, 370
Bruni, its name, 1; early Chinese intercourse, 36; its Sultan's Chinese ancestress, 38; formerly a powerful kingdom—becomes a dependency of Majapahit, 39; the Spanish and Portuguese arrive, 40; trade with the latter, 41; a Roman Catholic mission established, *ib.*; the Portuguese factory, *ib.*; Spanish interference, *ib.*; the Dutch visit Bruni, 42; and the English, *ib.*; the English factory, 43; decadence, *ib.*; territory ceded to Sulu transferred to the East India Co., 53; Rajah Api, *ib.*; Rajah Muda Hasim becomes Regent, 54; the Limbang oppressed, 57; list of the Sultans, 59; crews of English ships detained, 80, 81, 82; Bruni and its Court, 82; in sympathy with the pirates, 93; Rajah Muda Hasim reinstated, 113; P. Usup's intrigues, 114; Sir T. Cochrane deals with Usup, 115; murder of the princes, 119; Cochrane attacks Bruni, 122; the provisional govt., 123; submission of the Sultan, 124; his successors, *ib.*; Labuan ceded to Great Britain, 126; dissensions—the Rajah establishes order, 216; P. Makota in power, *ib.*; offices of the four wazirs revived, 217; the councils of Bruni, *ib.*; the "Haven of Peace," 326; apathy of the British Govt., 327, 329, 330; Sultan Mumin, 327; hereditary rights, 327, 349; the people oppressed, 327; trade restriction, 329; the Sultan helpless, *ib.*; treaty with Sarawak, 331; is worse than useless, 332; the Kayans revolt, 332, 335; relations with the Baram, 333; the cession of Baram to Sarawak—impeded by the British Govt., 335, 336, 339, 340, 341; the Rajah's advice to the Foreign Office, —adopted too late, 337; massacre of Dusuns, 342; Limbang in rebellion, 343, 344, 346, 348; Trusan ceded to Sarawak, 344; murder of P. Japar, 350; Bruni becomes a British Protectorate, 351; Limbang annexed by the Rajah, 352; a design to depose the Sultan in favour of the Rajah, 359; comments by the *Singapore Free Press*, 359; Consul Keyser on Bruni, 360; policy of the British Govt., 360; Tutong and Belait in revolt, 361; the Kadayans revolt, *ib.*; a British resident appointed, 362; a peculiar policy, 336, 337, 363, 365, 366, 371, 372; the Sultan prepared to transfer Bruni to Sarawak, 364; tardy action of the Foreign Office, 365; the *Straits Budget* on Bruni affairs, 370
Bua Hassan, Haji, becomes Datu Imaum —then Datu Bandar, 77, 193, 212, 224, 232, 234, 308, 396, 420
Buck, Q. A., 25
Bujang, Sherip, 208
Buju, Banyok chief, 227, 285
Bukitans, the, 12, 13, 33
Bulan, Sea Dayak chief, 160
Bulwer, Sir Henry, Governor of Labuan —inimical to Sarawak, 339
Burdett-Coutts, Baroness, assists the late Rajah, 243; her experimental gardens, 319
Buyong, Abang, 195, 199

Census, 32
Chalmers, Bishop, 448
Chambers, Bishop, 446, 448
Channon, John, 178, 181, 253
Chinese, The, their characteristics, 31; their early connection with Borneo, 36; traces of early settlers, 37; the Chinese ancestress of the Sultans of Bruni, 38; ancient trade with Borneo, 44; merchants in Sarawak, 426
Chinese Rebellion. The Chinese colony,

185, 188; the Secret Society — its origin and objects, 186; it becomes arrogant, 187; and is punished, 188; fined for smuggling, *ib.*; encouraged by the Sultan of Sambas, 189; the Chinese emboldened by false rumours, *ib.*; precautions taken, 190; rumours disregarded, 191; the Chinese advance on Kuching, *ib.*; Kuching attacked, 192; the Rajah's escape, *ib.*; Nicholetts killed, *ib.*; other English killed and wounded — the stockades taken, 193; the survivors gather at the mission-house, 195; the Chinese form a government, 196; they retire up river, 197; attacked by Abang Pata, they return, *ib.*; the Malays under the Datu Bandar resist them, *ib.*; escape of the English survivors, 198; return of the Rajah in the *Sir James Brooke*, *ib.*; the flight of the Chinese, *ib.*; brave stand made by the Datu Bandar, *ib.*; loss sustained by the rebels, *ib.*; arrival of the Tuan Muda, *ib.*; the retreat of the rebels, 199; the survivors escape over the borders, 200; quarrel amongst themselves, and are arrested by the Dutch, *ib.*; their total losses, 201; action of the English and Dutch authorities, *ib.*; the rebellion a direct outcome of the Commission, 202; comments of the *Times* and the *Daily News*, *ib.*; the Government impoverished, *ib.*; fidelity of the natives, *ib.*; difficulties faced, 203; return of the Chinese, *ib.*; further account of the Secret Societies, 203-206

Clarendon, Lord, 329, 402

Clarke, Sir Andrew, his policy and the late Rajah's, 338

Cobden, Joseph, supports Hume against the Rajah, 140; his speech at Birmingham, 141; comments on his assertions, 142

Cochrane, Mr. Bailie, takes Mr. Gladstone to task, 150

Cochrane, Admiral Sir Thomas, interested in Bornean affairs, 114; punishes P. Usup, 115; destroys S. Usman's stronghold, 116; sails for Borneo to support the Rajah, 121; he attacks Bruni, 122; his wish to place the Rajah on the Bruni throne, 123; his cruise against the pirates on the N.-W. coast, *ib.*

Collier, Vice-Admiral Sir Francis, 135

Commission to inquire into the Rajah's proceedings, Hume's motion negatived, 141, 144; a Commission granted, 144; it sits in Singapore, 147; proceedings and findings, 148; its evil effects upon Sarawak, 151, 189, 202, 210, 224, 231, 268

Cotteau, Edmond, on Sarawak, 409

Cox, E. A. W., 20

Crookshank, A. C., 129, 139, 163, 190, 192, 193, 195, 204, 234, 262

Cruickshank, J. B., 178, 180, 234, 260, 282, 285, 288, 320, 324

Crymble, Mr., 193, 194

Cuateron, Fr., 449

Cunynghame, Sir Percy, Bt., 388

Dagang, 254

Daily News, *The*, assails the Rajah, 140; commends him, 202

Dallas, F. H., 426

Dampier, on piracy and its cause, 50; on the Lanuns, 93

Dandi, expedition against, 161

Datus, The, the *serah* or forced trade, 55; the Sarawak datus reinstated, 77; their duties, 207; their loyalty, 224; their faithful services, 420

Dayak, meaning of the word, 33

de Crespigny, C. A. C., 328, 341

Derby, Earl of, 144; refuses protection, 242; his successor's compliment, 401

Deshon, H. F., 388, 405

Devereaux, Hon. H. R., 147

de Windt, Margaret Alice Lili, *see* the Ranee

de Windt, H., 325

Dias, 44

Drummond, Henry, defends the Rajah, 141, 142

Dulah, Nakoda, 233

Dunn, The Very Rev. E., 449

Dutch, at Bruni, 42; they replace the Portuguese at Sambas, 42; at Pontianak and other places in Borneo, *ib.*; they found Batavia, 47; paramount in the Archipelago, *ib.*; are checked by the English, *ib.*; in Southern Borneo, *ib.*; their oppressive policy induces piracy, 49; their aims in regard to Sarawak, 66; unjust trade regulation, 67; their jealousy of the Rajah, 126; their pretensions to N.-W. Borneo, 128; their friendly offer of help, 201; warn the Sarawak Govt., 231; troubles with the Dayaks, 377; the border question, 379; the Dayaks receive a lesson, 381; they co-operate with the Sarawak Govt., 384; friendly relations, 318, 385

Earl, G. W., on the Sherips, 74; on the Sambas pirates, 92; on piracy, 92

Education, 439. *See* under Schools

Edwardes, Hon. G. W., Governor of Labuan—inimical to Sarawak, 246; he supports S. Masahor, *ib.*, 247, 256; he blames the Tuan Muda, 247; his unwarrantable intervention at Muka, 256; his interview with P. Matusin, 257; his pledges, *ib.*; he breaks his pledges, 258; he leaves the Muka people to the mercy of their oppressors, *ib.*; the evil effects of his actions, 259; which are disavowed by the British Govt., 261
Egerton, Commander, R.N., a plot to take his life, 120, 122
English, The, the first in Borneo, 42; at Bantam, *ib.*, 46, 47; at Balambangan, 43; at Bruni, *ib.*; at Bencoolen, 46, 47; at Pulo Penang, 47; Java taken, *ib.*; Singapore founded, *ib.*; at Banjermasin, 47, 48; they seize Manila, 53; they destroy Sambas, 92
Ersat, Pangiran, the Sultan's deputy at Muka, 213; is killed by P. Matusin, 214; S. Masahor avenges his death, *ib.*; his son, P. Nipa, succeeds him, 219
Everest, Lieut., R.N., 135
Everett, A. H., 6
Expenditure of the raj, 426

Farquhar, Admiral Sir Arthur, K.C.B., at the battle of Beting Maru, 135; his defence of the late Rajah, 150
Fox, C., at Serekei, 218, 220; is murdered, 223, 225; his murder avenged, 294

Gadong, Orang Kaya di, 258, 364
Gadong, Pangiran di, claimant to the sultanate, 347; loses his rights in the Limbang, 353
Gani, *see* Abdul Gani
Gapur, *see* Abdul Gapur
Genghis Khan, 36
Geology of Sarawak, 4
Gibbard, Lieut., R.N., killed in Marudu Bay, 116
Gladstone, W. E., and the little England party, 111; his attitude towards the late Rajah, 140, 141; in 1877, 150, 202, 281
Gomes, Rev. W. H., B.D., 448
Grant, Charles, 158, 234, 237
Granville, Earl, jurisdiction over British subjects granted, 342
Gray, A. H., *Wanderings in Borneo*, 404
Grey, Earl, 144; his reply to Gladstone, 150; his testimony, 402
Grey, Sir George, 281
Gueritz, M. G., 405

Harvey, J., 427
Hasim, Rajah Muda, Regent of Bruni, 54; sent to govern Sarawak, *ib.*; his kindness to shipwrecked sailors, 62; his character and position, 65; offers Mr. Brooke the raj, 69; his procrastination and ingratitude, 71; he instals Mr. Brooke as Rajah, 73; his correct title and position, 74; he returns to Bruni, and is reinstated there, 113; his life menaced, 114; is threatened by S. Usman, 115; he becomes Sultan Muda, 118; his end, 120
Hasim Jalil, Sultan of Bruni. His doubtful parentage, 69; in opposition to Sultan Mumin, 216; becomes Pangiran Temanggong, 217; he repudiates the action of P. Nipa at Muka, 249; oppresses the Limbang, 343; is caught in a trap, *ib.*; agrees to the cession of Trusan to Sarawak, 344; in favour of ceding Limbang, 345; his accession, 346; his awkward position, 347; the nominee of the British Govt., *ib.*; is unable to act against the Limbang — he seeks the Rajah's aid, 348; the Rajah refuses to help, 348, 410; his resentment, 349; the murder of P. Japar, 350; he opposes the cession of Limbang, 350; his true motive, 353; refuses compensation for the Limbang, *ib.*; he encourages O. K. Lawai, 359; is reconciled to the Rajah—is prepared to transfer Bruni to Sarawak, 364; is forced to accept a British Resident, 367; his death, *ib.*
Hay, Mr., 234, 236, 264
Head-hunting, its origin, 25
Helms, L. V., 6, 195, 262, 269, 410
Henderson, R., 427
Hennessy, Sir J. Pope, Governor of Labuan—his policy in regard to Bruni, 330; false representations, 331; mistaken views, 339
Herbert, Sydney, supports Hume, 140, 281
Hertslet, Sir Edward, 336
Hewit, J., 9, 34
Hindu vestiges, 17, 21, 39
Horsburgh, Rev. A., 147
Horton, Lieut. Wilmot, R.N., 98, 100, 101
Hose, Bishop, 446-448
Hose, Charles, D.Sc., 341
Hoste, Capt. Sir William, R.N., 201

Hume, J., his proceedings against the late Rajah, 140, 141, 142, 144, 148
Hunt, on Bruni, 44; at Bruni, 82
Hunt, Lieut., R.N., 98

Illanun, *see* Lanun
Indra Lila, The, expelled from Ngmah, 16; at Lingga, 158
Ireland, Alleyne, on Sarawak, 418
Isa, Dang, 158

Jackson, Very Rev. T., 449
Japar, Pangiran, murder of, 350
Japar, Sherip, with the expedition against the Saribas, 100; his services at Rembas, 101; is deposed from his governorship, 108; deported to Sadong, 109
Jarom, Rajah, the founder of Sarawak, 45; his descendants, 78, 421
Jars, Old, 26
Johnson, Rev. F. C., 130, 154
Johnson, Henry Stuart, 261, 284, 288, 291, 303
Jungle produce, 7, 434

Kabah, The attack on, 228
Kadayans, their origin, 20; meaning of the name, 33; they revolt against the Sultan, 361
Kajulau expedition, 167
Kanowit, Fort built, 143; description of, 220; the murder of Steele and Fox, 223
Kanowits, 18; adherents of S. Masahor, 223
Karim, *see* Abdul Karim
Kasim, Datu Bandar, at Sadong, 117; conspires against the Govt., 223; a deep plot, 231, 235; in open revolt, 237; his punishment, 239, 242
Kayans, their origin, 16; their countries, *ib.*; pressed back by the Sea-Dayaks, *ib.*; customs, *ib.*; cruelties, 17, 282, 316; chiefs, 18; meaning of name, 33; their independence, 55; they give trouble, 281; are attacked by the Tuan Muda, 284; they submit, 293; revolt of the Baram Kayans, 332, 335; Aban Jau, 342; a peaceable people, 391
Keane, Capt., R.N., 262
Kenyahs, their origin, 16; their countries, *ib.*; customs, *ib.*; chiefs, 18; a peaceable people, 391; their chief, Tama Bulan, 391
Keppel, Hon. Sir Henry, on the Land-Dayaks, 21; his testimony, 89; interested in the Rajah's work, 90; gives his support, *ib.*; the benefactor of Sarawak, *ib.*; takes action against the pirates, 97; attacks the Saribas, 100; and the Batang Lupar, 104; on board the *Meander*, 130; on Bruni, 331; his opinion of the Tuan Muda, 413; his last visit, *ib.*
Keyser, Consul, his report on Bruni, 360; on Sarawak, 417, 433
Kina Balu, or Mt. St. Pedro, 2, 37
Kota, Dayang, 156
Kublai Khan, invades Borneo, 36
Kuching, in 1839, 64, 400; meaning of name, 64; in 1867, 89; destroyed by the Chinese, 192; described, 394-400

Labuan. Survivors from Balambangan settle there, 43; selected as a British settlement, 113; a failure, 113, 330; annexed by Britain, 126; the first Rajah appointed governor, 130; he establishes the Colony, 131; Governor Edwardes, 246; its governors obstructive to Sarawak, 331; a dog-in-the-manger policy, 336; an impartial Governor, 336; transferred to the British North Borneo Co., 341
Lada, Pangiran, killed at Muka, 254
Laksamana, Orang Kaya, 364
Lanans, 18, 19
Landak, Dutch Factory, 42
Land-Dayaks, their districts, 21; traces of Hinduism, *ib.*; traditions and character, 21; an oppressed people, 54, 55, 57, 75
Land regulations, 432
Lang Endang, 381
Lang-river expedition, 163
Lanun pirates, 92; their country and character, 93; once peaceable—Dampier's account, *ib.*; their vessels—cruising grounds, 94; their settlements, 95; their haunts, 96. *See* also under Piracy
Lawai, Orang Kaya, 358
Lawas, transferred to Sarawak, 362
Lee, at Lingga, 155, 156; his death, 157, 184
Leys, Dr., C.M.G., 355
Lila Pelawan, The, 16, 158
Lila Wangsa, The, 158
Limbang river, its people oppressed by Bruni, 57, 216; they revolt, 343, 346, 348; annexed by Sarawak, 352; the Foreign Office approve of the annexation, 353; Sir Spencer St. John's views, 354; a station established, 355; expedition against O. K. Lawai, 358; 410
Lingga, description of, 158

Linggir, his encounter with the *Nemesis*, 137; attempts the Rajah's life, *ib.*; his narrow escape, 178
Lintong, or Mua-ari, 177, 323, 324
Lisums, 12
Logan, J. R., on an ancient Chinese trade with Borneo, 44
Lord Melbourne's crew detained at Bruni, 80
Low, Sir Hugh, G.C.M.G., on Bruni, 38, 41, 43, 53; on Sultan Omar, 83; joins the staff at Labuan, 130; at Bruni, 351, 352, 355
Low, H. B., 55, 323, 334
Lugats, 12

Madangs, 19
Majapahit, The Empire of, its rule extended over Borneo, 21, 38, 39; its fall, 39, 40
Makota, Pangiran, the rebellion in Sarawak caused by him, 46, 54; his oppression of the Limbang people, 58; his character and exactions, 65; his plot against Mr. Brooke, 71; he resorts to poison, 73; his downfall, *ib.*; he is banished, 86; is commissioned to murder the Rajah, *ib.*; joins S. Sahap, 104; is driven out of Patusan, *ib.*; taken prisoner, 108; is allowed to retire to Bruni, 109; in power there, 130; his cruelties in the Limbang, 216; is sent to oppress Muka, *ib.*; sole minister at Bruni, 217; his death, 87, 219, 343
Malacca, settled by Malays, 39; conquered by Portugal, 41; its old trade with Bruni, *ib.*; taken by Holland, *ib.*; by England, 47
Malays, the latest immigrants in Borneo, 28; their origin, 28, 39; their settlements in Sarawak, 28; character, *ib.*; they settle at Singapore, 39; are expelled, *ib.*; they retire to Malacca, *ib.*; become Muhammadans, *ib.*; their spread over the Archipelago, 40; they conquer Majapahit, *ib.*; Malayan States in Borneo, 44; difference between the Sarawak and Bruni Malays, 64; education, 441; religion, 443
Malohs, 18
Manila, *see* under the Philippines
Marco Polo, on ancient Chinese trade, 44
Masahor, Sherip, chief at Serikei, 74, 138, 208; supplies the Dayaks with powder, 184, 209; his connection with Datu Patinggi Gapur, 208; they plot together, *ib.*; he becomes a source of danger, 209; his cold-blooded cruelty at Muka, 214; he is punished and leaves Serikei, 215; he is pardoned, and plots again, 220; his pretended friendliness, 221, 222; the murder of Steele and Fox, 223, 225; he executes some of the murderers, 226; he feigns loyalty, 227, 231; an intricate plot, 231, 235, 237; he advances on Kuching, and is stopped by the Tuan Muda, 237; his treachery exposed, 238; is attacked by the Tuan Muda, *ib.*; his narrow escape, *ib.*; is driven out of Sarawak, 240; is supported by Gov. Edwardes, 246, 256; his conduct at Muka, 248; left at Muka under the ægis of the British flag, 258, 259; the piratical Sea-Dayaks rely upon his support, 260; his independence of Bruni, 262; his hostile reception of English visitors at Muka, *ib.*; he is banished, *ib*; his end, 264; his cruelties, *ib.*
Matali, Pangiran, 155, 170, 171, 174
Matusain, Sherip, 70, 138, 147, 188, 236
Matusin, Pangiran, at feud with P. Ersat, 213; his character, *ib.*; he kills P. Ersat, 214; escapes from Muka, *ib.*; at feud with P. Nipa, 221; his life in danger, 222; is relieved by the Tuan Muda, and retires to Kuching, *ib.*; at the attack on Muka, 253, 256; he confronts Gov. Edwardes, 257; at the fight with the pirates, 273
Maxwell, F. R. O., 344, 345
M'Dougall, Bishop, the Chinese rebellion, 195-198; withdraws from Sarawak, 234; the fight with the pirates, 269; first missionary and bishop, 446
Melanus, their origin, 19; cultivators of the sago palm, *ib.*; their country, *ib.*; character, *ib.*, 263; former cruelties, 316
Menangkabau, the cradle of the Malay, 28, 39; one of its princes founds Sarawak, 45
Mercator's map, 37, 41, 45
Mersal, Datu Temanggong, 77, 78, 215, 224, 232, 422
Middleton, P., 191, 192, 193, 195
Minerals, 5-7, 435
Missions, 446-450
Mua-ari, *see* Lintong
Muara, *see* Brooketon
Muhammad, Nakoda, Bruni agent, 248
Muhammad Aim, Haji, made Datu Imaum, 78, 421
Muhammad Ali, Haji, made Datu Hakim, 78, 421
Muhammad Hasan, Datu Temanggong, 78, 422

Muhammad Jamal, present Sultan of Bruni, 124, 367
Muhammad Kasim, Datu Bandar, 78, 421
Muhammad Lana, Datu Bandar, 77, 196-199, 224, 233, 420
Muhammad Tejudin, Pangiran Muda, 347
Muka, its name, 19; trade, 213, 222, 248; invested by the Sarawak forces, 250; trade ruined, 259; its revival, 263; ceded to Sarawak, *ib.*; the fort captured by prisoners, 321
Mular, Sherip, chief at Sekrang, 74; is active against the Rajah, 79; feigns submission, 101; his stronghold, 104; its destruction, 107; again active with other Sherips, 117; his intrigue, 130; as a friend, 266; his end, 109
Mumin, Pangiran, 84; becomes Sultan of Bruni, 124; encourages plots against Sarawak, 220; objects to interference at Muka, 223; insults the General Council, 311; the huckster, 327; 331; the Limbang revolt, 343; his treachery, 344; favours the cession of Limbang to Sarawak, 345; his death, 346; his imbecile son, and the succession, 347
Munan, Pengulu Dalam, 23, 389, 390
Mundy, Captain Rodney, R.N., at Ambong, 95; his operations against the pirates, 123; attacks Haji Seman, *ib.*; he occupies Labuan, 126
Muruts, 20, 346, 359

Natuna Islands, the *Dido's* boats attacked, 97; the people oppressed, 416
Natural History of Sarawak, 8
Ngmah, old Malay settlement, 16
Ngumbang, 383, 384
Nicholetts, H., his death, 192
Nicol, J. D., 427
Nipa, Pangiran, succeeds his father at Muka, 219; at feud with P. Matusin, 221; closes Muka to Sarawak traders, 248; is attacked, 250; is protected by Gov. Edwardes, 256; he checks S. Masahor, 262; is recalled to Bruni, 263

Okong, 359
Omar Ali, Sultan of Bruni, 53; his reputed sons, 69; his appearance and character, 83; his reception of the Queen's message, 113; is prejudiced against his uncles, 114, 118; causes them to be murdered, 119; prepares to resist the fleet, 121; his ruse to entrap the Admiral, *ib.*; is driven out of Bruni, 122; his submission, 124; he cedes Sarawak unconditionally to the Rajah, *ib.*; his death, *ib.*
Ong Sum Ping or Ong Ti Ping, governor of old Chinese colony, 38; his daughter marries the Sultan of Bruni, *ib.*
Oyong Hang, Kayan chief, 282, 283, 292, 293

Padi destroyed, 100
Paku destroyed, 101; a second time, 138
Palgrave, Sir W. G., on Sarawak, 418
Palmerston, Viscount, approves of Sarawak flag, 131; supports the Rajah in Parliament, 141, 144; and recognition, 280; 296
Pata, Abang, 78, 197, 209, 422
Patusan destroyed, 104
Peace Society, scurrilous advocacy of the pirates, 140
Pearse, C. S., 426
Penty, Charles, 192
Perham, Archdeacon, 448
Philippines, The, annexed by Spain, 41; attacked by the Dutch, 47; Manila captured by the British, 53
Pigafetta, on leaf insects, 8; on Bruni, 40
Piracy, induced by trade restrictions, 49-52, 68; the Sea-Dayaks become pirates, 52, 55, 56; in Sarawak, 63, 76; Earl on piracy, 75, 96; repulse of the Saribas, 80; P. Bedrudin's case, 80; the pirates described, 92; Bruni encouragement, 93; Ambong destroyed by pirates, 95; apathy of the British, 96; their haunts, *ib.*; Singapore their market, *ib.*, 116; the Saribas and Sekrang pirates, 97; *Dido's* boats attacked off Sirhasan, 98; the *Jolly Bachelor's* fight, *ib.*; expedition up the Saribas river, 100; expedition up the Batang Lupar, 104; piratical party in Sarawak dominant, 109; Dutch efforts, 93, 111; S. Usman's stronghold destroyed, 116; the Sea-Dayaks ravage the coast, 117; Cochrane operations against the pirates, 123; the *Nemesis* destroys a pirate fleet, 128; fresh ravages by the Sea-Dayaks, 132; they are attacked by the Rajah, 134; the battle of Beting Maru, 136; the Saribas and Rejang rivers attacked, 138; Hume and Cobden indict the Rajah, 140; Balenini strongholds destroyed by the Spanish, 267; revival of piracy, 268; fate of a Spanish girl, *ib.*; naval officers hampered, *ib.*; pirates on the Sarawak coast, 269; their fleet de-

stroyed by the Rajah Muda, 270; the biters bit, 274; Amzah's narrative, 275; the final lesson, 277; action of the Dutch and Spanish, *ib.*; Tungku destroyed, 278
Pontianak, Dutch Factory, 42
Portuguese, at Bruni, 40; at Sambas, 41; expelled from Sambas, 42; and other settlements by the Dutch, 47
Prinsep, C. R., 147
Ptolemy's Insula Bonæ Fortunæ, 40
Punans, 12, 13, 15
Putra, Sherip, 75

Raffles, Sir Stamford, on trade and piracy, 49; on Dutch trade regulations, 67; on the Sheriffs, 75; is censured for founding Singapore, 297
Rahman, *see* Abul Rahman
Rainfall of Sarawak, 34
Rajahs of Sarawak, *see* under Brooke
Rajah Muda, *see* James Brooke and Charles Vyner Brooke
Ranee, The, 10, 37; her marriage, 325; arrives in Sarawak, 393; visits Pontianak and Batavia, 400; death of her children, 401; her life in Sarawak, 414
Rejang river, the Rajah deputed by the Sultan to govern the district, 218
Religions, Muhammadan, 443-445; Pagan, 446; Christian, 446-449
Rembas destroyed, 101
Rentap, at Sadok, 155; kills Lee, 157; his character, 160; attacked in the Lang, 163; is wounded, 165; the Inland Rajah, 172; his stronghold at Sadok, 172; first attack, 173; second attack, 181; third attack, 183; his defeat and end, 184, 260
Revenue of Sarawak, 425
Richardson, F., 427
Ricketts, G. T., first British Consul of Sarawak, 281
Ricketts, O. F., 356
Rodway, Major W. H., 321
Roman Catholic Mission, 441-449
Rozario, F. de, 13
Russel, Lord John, 144, 257, 280, 281, 423

Sadok, *see* Rentap
Sahap, Sherip, his first meeting with the late Rajah, 66; governor of Sadong, 74; his cruelty to the Sau Dayaks, 76; is active against the Rajah, 79; he receives a lesson, 80; feigns submission, 101; he assumes the offensive, 103; retires to Patusan, *ib.*; ravages the coast, *ib.*; his stronghold, 104; its destruction, *ib.*; he escapes, 108; his end, 109
St. John, Horace, on the Malay, 29
St. John, Sir Spencer, G.C.M.G., on the Malay, 29; on Bruni oppression, 57; on piracy in Sarawak, 63; his description of Datu Bay, 64; he joins the Rajah's staff, 130; his account of the Chinese rebellion, 193, 195; of Datu Patinggi Gapur's plot, 209; the interference of Sarawak in Muka affairs, 223; on Tani's execution, 226; on the Malay plots, 234; his opinion of Gov. Edwardes' conduct, 246, 257; his conviction of S. Masahor's guilt, 247; he arranges difficulties caused by Gov. Edwardes, 261; at Oya and Muka, 262; errors, 302, 319; on the Sarawak Govt., 309; on the annexation of the Limbang, 354
Saji, a notorious head-hunter, 168; his treachery, 171; a cold-blooded act, 172; prepares for a foray, 177; is attacked, 178; he attacks Betong fort, 179; his death, 180
Sakalai, the murderer of Fox, 225, 228, 229, 230, 290, 292; his death, 293
Salisbury, Lord, 340
Samarang, H.M.S., on the rocks at Kuching, 102
Sambas, Portuguese Factory, 41; Dutch Factory, 42; a pirate stronghold, 92; destroyed by the British, *ib.*
Samsu, Bandari, Bruni agent, 248
Sandom, 171, 174
Santubong, meaning of name, 37; old Chinese settlement, *ib.*; Hindu-Javan settlement, 38
Sarawak, its rivers, 3; geology, 4; minerals, 5, 435; jungles, 7; natural history, 8; products, 9; crocodiles, *ib.*; fish, 11; earlier inhabitants, 12; Indonesian tribes, *ib.*; Land-Dayaks, 21; Sea-Dayaks, 22; Malays, 28; Chinese, 31; population census, 32; names of tribes, how derived, 33; area, 34; climate, *ib.*; early Chinese Settlement, 37; Hindu-Javan colony, 38; early history, 45; in rebellion against Bruni, 54, 65, 68; Kuching in 1839, 64; Dutch aims, 66; end of the rebellion, 70; Mr. Brooke becomes Rajah, 73; its limited extent, *ib.*; neighbouring countries, 74; the condition of the country, 75; the Datus, 77, 78; Mr. Brooke confirmed as Rajah, 85; the raj becomes a refuge for the oppressed, 89; is ceded to the Rajah in perpetuity, 103; in-

crease of population, 112; in 1845, 116; the raj granted to the Brookes unconditionally, 124, 125; the question of its independence, 126, 149, 423; Dutch pretensions, 126; the Sarawak flag, 131; increased population, 142; recognition by the United States, 144; trade in 1842-1852, 149; extra territory obtained, 159; further cession of territory, 263; recognition by the British Govt., 280; the Government and administration, 309; its Councils, 310; the administration in outstations, 312; Muhammadan Courts, *ib.*; native officers, 313; abolition of slavery, 315-318; foreign relations, 318; public debt, 319, 425; cession of Baram, 335-369, 340, 341; Trusan ceded, 344, 345; Lawas acquired, 362; becomes a British Protectorate—terms of agreement, 406; unaided progress, 407; prosperity of the raj, 417; native officials, 420; what its people owe to the Brookes, 423; commercial progress—revenue, 425; its merchants, 428; agricultural industries, 429; land regulations, 432; jungle produce, 434; mechanical industries, 438; education, 439; schools, 441-443; religions, 443-449

Sarawak Rangers, 376

Saribas, *see* Sea-Dayaks and Piracy

Sassoon, Bt., Sir Edward, 367, 368, 370

Sauh Besi, 171, 174, 175

Sawing, murderer of Fox, 225, 226, 229, 290, 292, 293; his execution, 294

Schools, 441-443

Sea-Dayaks, press the Kayans back, 16; the proto-Malays, 22; their origin, *ib.*; districts, *ib.*; appearance and character, 23, 24; the dominant race, 24; their spread, *ib.*; head-hunting, 25; old jars, 26; a Dayak village, 27; they become pirates, 52, 55, 56, 97; the Balaus and Undups, 100, 101, 375; Balaus and Seboyaus, 158; the Sea-Dayaks difficult to control, 321; the Ulu Ai Dayaks give trouble, 374, 375; well-disposed Dayaks, 375; their energy and thrift, 376, 387; they give the Dutch trouble, 377; punitive expeditions, 378; treachery of the Tamans and Bunut Malays, 379; expedition against the Upper Batang Lupar Dayaks, 380; insolence of the Kapuas Dayaks, *ib.*; the Dutch administer a lesson, 381; fourth Katibas expedition, *ib.*; lapse of the Sekrangs *ib.*; their punishment, 382; the upper Rejang Dayaks, *ib.*; are attacked, 383; raid by the Seriang Dayaks, *ib.*; Kadang, attacked, *ib.*; co-operation with the Dutch, 384; peace makings, 385; intertribal feuds, 386; the upper Rejangs again attacked, 387; the rebel Bantin, *ib.*; he is attacked, 388; a tragical retreat, 389; Bantin again attacked, *ib.*; the affair of Entimau hill, 390; Bantin submits, *ib.*; good qualities of the Dayaks, *ib.*; education 440; religion, 446. *See* also under Piracy

Secret Societies, *see* Chinese Rebellion

Seduans, 15

Segalangs, 12; S. Masahor's adherents, 223, 265

Sekapans, 18

Sekrangs, *see* Sea-Dayaks and Piracy

Seman, Haji, becomes the Sultan's counsellor, 118; attacked by Capt. Mundy, 123; is pardoned, 128

Seman, Penglima, 165, 215, 229, 230, 251

Serah, or forced trade, 55

Serail, Pangiran, Bruni envoy, fires on the Sarawak flag, 221; is fined, 222; Mr. Spenser St. John's action, 223;

Seru Dayaks, 12

Sherips, The, pest of the Archipelago, 44; teach the Sea-Dayaks to pirate, 52; their character, 74; their ascendency, 75; their strongholds, 93; religious impostors, 445

Sians, 15, 18

Sibu fort attacked, 323

Sinclair, E., 321

Singapore, founded by Malays in 1160, 39; conquered by Majapahit, *ib.*; becomes a British Colony, 47; a market for the pirates, 96, 116; Sir Stamford Raffles, 297

Singapore Free Press, 150, 359, 372

Skelton, H., 323

Smith, John, 427

Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, 441-449

Spanish, at Bruni, 40; they annex the Philippines, 41; their interference at Bruni, *ib.*; capture Sulu, 53; in Mindanao, 94. *See* also under Piracy

Spectator, The, assails the Rajah, 140

Steele, H., 163, 180; at Kanowit, 221; is murdered, 223, 225; his murder avenged, 294; a previous escape, 325,

Steward, G., killed in the Sekrang, 108

Straits Budget, 370

Subu, Inchi, 227, 395

Sukadana, Dutch factory, 42; English captured there, *ib.*

Sultana, detention of crew at Bruni, 81; their release, 82
Sultans of Bruni, list of, 59
Sulu, legends of the Chinese, 38; conquered by Bruni, 39; taken by the Spanish—the Sultan captured, 53; he is rescued by the British, *ib.*; territory in Borneo ceded to the British, *ib.*; piracy, 92, 95; treaty with Great Britain, 135, 337
Swettenham, Sir F. A., K.C.M.G., on Sir Stamford Raffles, 297; on the Malays, 420

Talip, murderer of Steele, 225, 226, 259, 290, 292; his death, 293
Tama Bulan, 391
Tani, 226, 285
Tanjongs, 18; their name, 33
Tejudin, Pangiran, his inhumanity, 350, 361
Temanggong, Datu, *see* under Mersal
Temanggong, Pangiran, *see* under Hasim Jalil
Templer, J. C., 145, 301, 427
Teting, Datu, drives the English from Balambangan, 43
Times, The, supports the Rajah, 142; comments on the attitude of the British Govt., 202, 242
Trade, monopolies induce piracy, 49, 50, 68; of Sarawak, 149, 428
Treacher, Sir W. H., K.C.M.G., on the Malay, 29; the Limbang revolt, 343, 344, 355
Trusan, ceded to Sarawak, 344; a flourishing district, 345; Murut feuds, 359
Tuan Besar, The, *see* under James Brooke Brooke
Tuan Bungsu, The, *see* under H. K. Brooke
Tuan Muda, The, *see* under C. A. and B. W. D. Brooke
Tunjang, personates a Bruni prince, 235, incited a rebellion, *ib.*; his successes, 236; checked by the Dutch, *ib.*; his fate, 242
Tutong, in revolt, 361; treachery of the Brunis, *ib.*

Ukits, 12, 15; their name, 33
United States, recognition of Sarawak, 144
Usman, Sherip, captures the crew of the *Sultana*, 81; chief of the Marudu pirates, 95; threatens Sultan Muda Hasim, 115; he is attacked and killed, 116
Ussher, H. T., C.M.G., Governor of Labuan, 336, 339
Usup, Datu Bandar Haji, 117
Usup, Pangiran, of Bruni, his character and intrigues, 84; in league with the pirate—his profits, 95; submits to R. M. Hasim, 113; his reception of the Queen's message, *ib.*; intrigues against Hasim, 114; enslaves British subjects, 115; is punished by Sir T. Cochrane, *ib.*; defeated by P. Bedrudin, 116; his execution, *ib.*

Venice of Borneo, The, 82
Ventimiglia, Antonio di, founder of a mission at Bruni, 41, 449
Vyner family, 401

Wade, Lieut., R.N., killed in the Undup, 107
Wallace, Dr. A. R., his tribute to the late Rajah, 303
Wallage, Capt., 134
Watson, W. C., 179, 225, 234, 253, 266, 284, 285, 291
Weld, Sir F., K.C.M.G., 351, 355
Wise, H., the late Rajah's discarded agent, 139, 140, 142

Xavier, St. Francisco, 448

THE END

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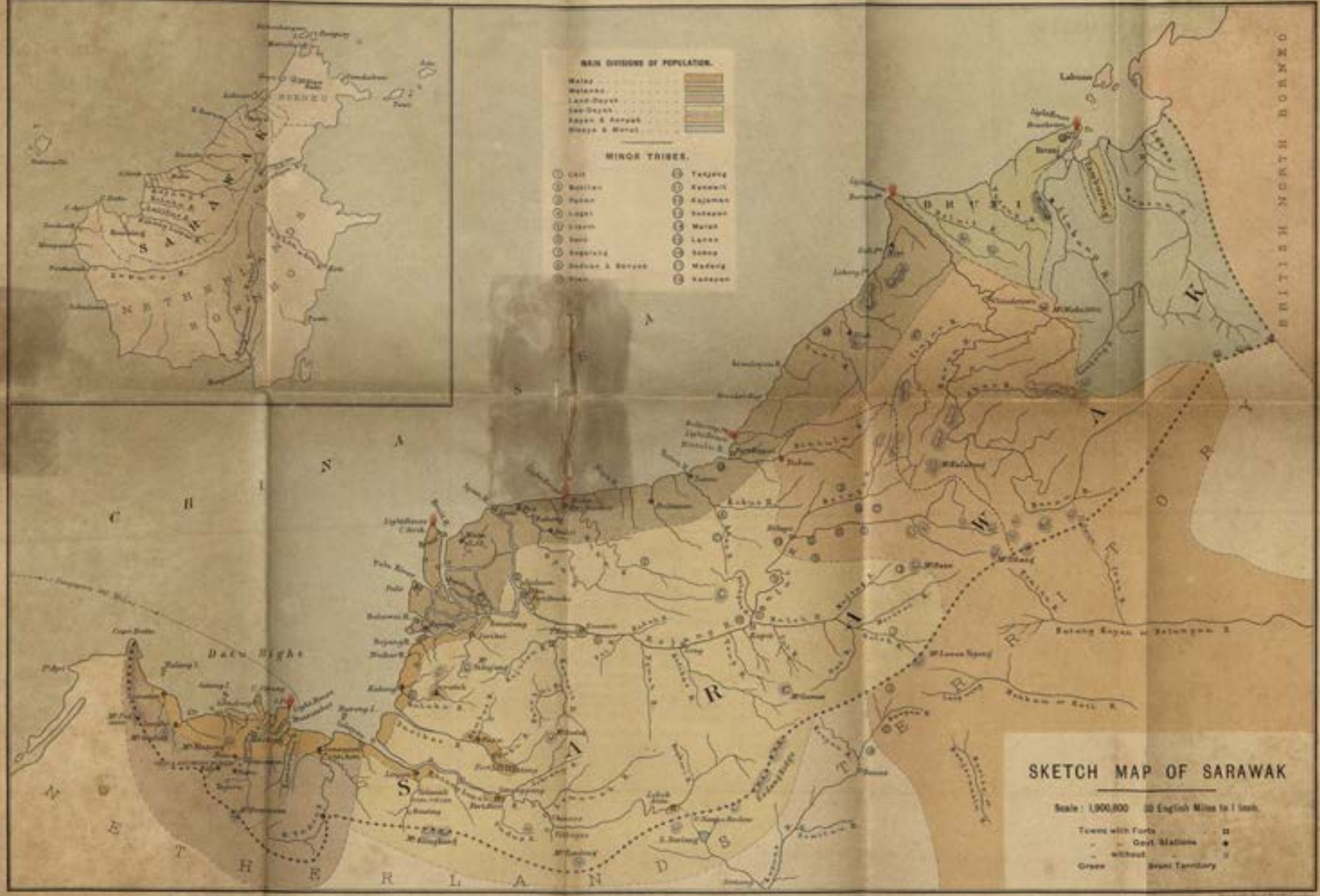
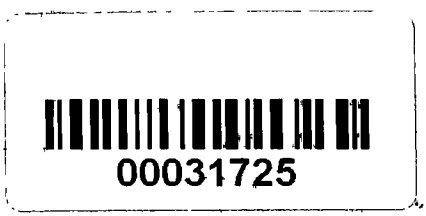

MAIN DIVISIONS OF POPULATION.
Malay
Melanau
Land-Dayak
Sea-Dayak
Kayan & Kenyah
Bisaya & Murut
MINOR TRIBES.
1 Ukit
2 Bukitan
3 Punan
4 Lugat
5 Lisum
6 Saut
7 Sagalang
8 Sadoan & Serpak
9 Kejaman
10 Tanjong
11 Kanowit
12 Kajaman
13 Sekapan
14 Melah
15 Lanun
16 Sebop
17 Madang
18 Kalagan
SKETCH MAP OF SARAWAK
Scale: 1,900,000 30 English Miles to 1 Inch.
Towns with Forts
Govt. Stations
without
Green
Brunei Territory
Dutch Territory
Batang Kayan or Belungan R.
Batang Rejang or Sarebas R.
Batang Baram or Kedaie R.
Batang Lawas or Kedaie R.
Batang Trusan or Kedaie R.
Batang Limbang or Kedaie R.
Batang Tutoh or Kedaie R.
Batang Kanowit or Kedaie R.
Batang Lupar or Kedaie R.
Batang Sadong or Kedaie R.
Batang Samarahan or Kedaie R.
Batang Sarawak or Kedaie R.
Batang Lundu or Kedaie R.
Batang Sambas or Kedaie R.
Batang Kayan or Kedaie R.
Batang Sebuku or Kedaie R.
Batang Tawau or Kedaie R.
Batang Sibuku or Kedaie R.
Batang Pandaruan or Kedaie R.
Batang Kinabatangan or Kedaie R.
Batang Labuk or Kedaie R.
Batang Sugut or Kedaie R.
Batang Paitan



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